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Flower fables and fancies

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A Marchioness of Londonderry

FLOWER FABLES AND FANCIES

BY

N. HUDSON MOORE

Author of "The Old China Book"
"The Old Furniture Book"
"The Lace Book," etc.

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M78

WITH DECORATIONS BY

FREDERICK G. HALL

And Forty-eight Illustrations from
Photographs of Flowers

ML

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TULIPS, DAFFODILS, AND CROCUSES.

"DWELLERS OF THE DUST."

THE earliest harbingers of spring, that "come before the swallow dares," are some of the "dwellers of the dust" that have lain the sullen winter through, waiting for the warming sun to draw them above the ground. First to appear is the snowdrop, "Fair maid of February," as it is sometimes named, bearing with drooping head the cruel fate which calls it "unlucky."

Then come the crocuses, timid little creatures that hug close to Mother Earth for the sake of the warmth her broad bosom affords. Purple and gold, pure white, or faintly streaked with lavender, they do not seem to need the sheltering protection of

green leaves that add so much to the beauty and effectiveness of other and statelier blooms.

In the almanac of flowers written in the garden bed the crocus plays a modest part. But who has not felt a thrill of delight when, on looking from the window some rude March day, a golden spear was discovered thrusting itself courageously through the snow that yet lingered there?

In the second week of March — yes, even before that — look for the first bees. Not the blundering bumblebees whose loud hum speaks of summer's warmth, but the slender honeybees, alert and trim, that have already visited the bog for the pollen from the homely skunk-cabbage, and now come to the crocus to rob it of its drops of nectar.

In almost every garden of New England you will find that in some sunny

"The Golden-Chaliced Crocus"

spot the crocuses bloom each spring, and Dr. Holmes tells the procession of the dwellers of the dust in their true order: —

"The golden-chaliced crocus burns;
The long narcissus blades appear;
The cone-beaked hyacinth returns
To light her blue-flamed chandelier.

"The willow's whistling lashes, wrung
By the wild winds of gusty March,
With sallow leaflets lightly strung,
Are swaying by the tufted larch.

"See the proud tulip's flaunting cup,
That flames in glory for an hour, —
Behold it withering, then look up —
How meek the forest-monarch's flower!

"When wake the violets, Winter dies;
When sprout the elm buds, Spring is near;
When lilacs blossom, Summer cries,
'Bud, little roses, Spring is here!'"

In the essay "Of Gardens," by Bacon, he extols the pleasures of a garden, and maintains that there should be included in the great garden smaller gardens for each month

in the year. For January and February he gives some unfamiliar names like the "Mezerion Tree, which then blossoms, Crocus Vernus, both the yellow and the grey, Prim-Roses, Anemones, the early Tulippa, Hiacynthus Orientalis, Chamaïris, Frettelaria."

In my own garden, I would part with almost any flower that makes its home there before I would give up my crocuses. They are only of two shades, yellow and white, for purple always seems to me to breathe of sadness, and to my mind these first flowers should speak only of joy, — joy that the long cold winter is past, that spring is at hand, that before long I shall welcome to the garden the robin, whose bright, clear whistle will take me to the window on a rún. There he is, on the old oak, a tree so venerable and so great that it seems a posi-

tive disrespect to call it merely "the oak," but which demands the descriptive term as well, to signify that it is the dean of all the trees hereabout, and the one first sought by the birds.

Before the last crocus has burned its brightness away I shall have heard the song of the sparrows, the organ notes of the white-throat, and the field-sparrow with its long-drawn tones of sweet sadness, and the song-sparrow with its happier trills, which it throws upon the air almost before the sun rises, and yet has voice to spare for its evening hymn.

Celia Thaxter has written charmingly of the song-sparrow in some verses which run: —

"In this sweet, tranquil afternoon of spring,
While the low sun declines in the clear west,
I sit and hear the blithe song-sparrow sing
His strain of rapture not to be suppressed;
Pondering life's problem strange, while death draws near, —
I listen to his dauntless song of cheer.

"Thou little bird, how canst thou thus rejoice,
As if the world had known nor sin nor curse?
God never meant to mock us with that voice!
That is the key-note of the universe,
That song of perfect trust, of perfect cheer,
Courageous, constant, free of doubt or fear.

"My little helper, ah, my comrade sweet,
My old companion in that far-off time
When on life's threshold childhood's wingèd feet
Danced in the sunrise! Joy was at its prime
When all my heart responded to thy song,
Unconscious of earth's discords harsh and strong.

"And slowly all my soul with comfort fills,
And the old hope revives and courage grows;
Up the deserted shore a fresh tide thrills,
And like a dream the dark mood melts and goes,
And with thy joy again will I rejoice;
God never meant to mock us with that voice!"

The warm sun brings warm hues.

"When daffodils begin to peer
With heigh, the doxy over the dale,
Why then comes in the sweet o' the year,"

and with it banks of yellow blooms.

While the more stately garden flowers have been storied and sung by poets of great and lesser degree, the humble firstlings of the year have not been without their admirers. The greatest poet

Daffodils

of all, Shakespeare, born in April himself, has celebrated the flowers of his month by loving and frequent reference. The iris, the mary-buds, and daffodils are mentioned over and over again, his love of flowers, like his knowledge of them, being remarkable.

The daffodil, a species of which grows wild in England, has been the subject of some of the prettiest poems ever written. It was Herrick who wrote,

"Fair daffodils, we weep to see
You haste away so soon."

Wordsworth's even more charming verses on the same flowers begin:—

"I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host of golden daffodils,
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Flutt'ring and dancing in the breeze."

All through England this pretty posy is woven about with quaint conceits. It is sometimes called lent-lily,

and dedicated to "Our Lady." In Germany it is called "Joseph's staff," and it is one of the many flowers which, it is told, budded in Joseph's hand.

That all these early flowers are accredited with bringing misfortune with them is shown over and over again. In some parts of England no young maid would pluck a daffodil; it would be courting death. How prettily Herrick tells it: —

> "When a daffodil I see
> Hanging down her head towards me,
> Guess I may what I must be;
> First, I shall decline my head;
> Secondly, I shall be dead;
> Lastly, safely buried."

If one wishes for positive distraction, it is to be found in the florist's catalogues, under the head "Daffodils." They run riot through hundreds of fascinating titles: the Circe, the Mary Anderson, — why did they not call one variety the Perdita? — the Phœnix,

Double Daffodils

the sulphur hoop-petticoat, and a score of equally suggestive names. Long ago I fell a victim to the spell which is woven by "the dwellers of the dust," and all winter long within doors they make glad spots of fragrance and beauty, and require the least attention of any blooming thing I know.

It is my fancy to render them as ethereal as possible. Out of doors they may be children of the dust, but in the house they are creatures of light and air, and — water! Not a bulb will I dabble with that will not consent to grow for me in water, and when you once make up your mind to this idea it is astonishing how many you can bend to your will. From November till April, that is from "snow-fly to grass-cut," as my Dutch gardener expresses it, I expect a succession of bloom, and by beginning in season I always have it.

The first to come are the Narcissi, the N. tazetta being my favourite. I seek some Chinese store to buy these, and set the large, heavy bulbs amid bright-hued stones that I have been for years collecting from the seashore. These bulbs are always placed in a bowl of Chinese porcelain, gay in colour and inimitable in design, for I have a fancy that the bulbs bloom more freely if placed in a vessel of their own nationality! Who knows but they whisper together of when they were in their own homes, and the Narcissi long for the presence of the sweet singing insects, so numerous in their own flowery land?

After the Chinese lilies have bloomed then come the Paper-white Narcissus, sweet and free-bloomers, filling the house with their perfume, so that when you enter from out of doors you feel as if spring were within, no matter what the temperature without.

Poets' Narcissus

Then come the hyacinths, every colour, single and double, each colour glowing in a glass as near to its own shade as I can get it. My favourites are the rose-pink and yellow ones, the latter having a tendency to bloom in a ball, instead of lengthening into a tall stem, as one would expect.

These toll me along till I can see the first flowers in the garden, and then I hurry the old bulbs into good, rich soil, for as they have given to me of their best, I return thanks in the way most grateful to them.

But, after all, there is nothing to compare with the flowers growing out of doors. Let us take up once more the procession of the spring.

The hyacinth, quite in contrast to the other flowers of the spring, seems oppressed with a burden of sadness, and bears on its frail petals the notes of grief, recording the sorrow of

Apollo for the death of his favourite, Hyacinthus.

"The melancholy hyacinth, that weeps
All night and never lifts an eye all day,"

as one poet phrases it, hangs his head overburdened with sweetness. Like the crocus, the hyacinth rejoices in the colour purple, beginning at a shade so pale that it seems more like the tint of far-away hills than a flower near at hand, and coming down through an hundred tones to that deep, dark tint that we associate with the words "royal purple."

The wild hyacinth, the grape hyacinth, with its flowers which never seem to fully expand, range through many lovely shades of that most rare of all colours in nature, blue.

Sir John Lubbock, the eminent English naturalist, has an explanation for this rarity, and says: —

"If blue is the favourite colour of

"The Melancholy Hyacinth"

bees, and if bees have so much to do with the origin of flowers, how is it that there are so few blue ones? I believe the explanation to be that all blue flowers have descended from ancestors in which the flowers were green, or, to speak more precisely, in which the leaves surrounding the stamens and pistil were green, and that they have passed through stages of white and yellow, and generally red, before becoming blue."

One cannot bear to think that our sweet, native wild hyacinth ever masqueraded in a gown of red or yellow, for though it is far paler in colour than the Siberian scilla, when it is seen growing in a mass its effect can hardly be improved upon. Baby's Breath and Lady's Tresses are two of the fanciful local names bestowed on these charming plants in New England.

The jonquil with its golden eye is a modest flower. The narcissus, its garden mate, has had so much legendary lore hung from its snowy star that its very name suggests a fairy tale. Can you not see the young Narcissus in the wood, tall, slender-limbed, and graceful, armed with his hunting spear? No wonder he tries to forget in the pleasures of the chase the importunities of Echo, a charming nymph 't is true, but whose ceaseless iteration serves only to annoy him. Coming upon a little brook, he casts himself beside it and bends forward to drink. He starts back, for, as he thinks, a lovely nymph of the pool rises to meet him. Admiring the wealth of golden curls, the blue eye and the rosy cheek, he smiles at her. She smiles in answer; he thrusts his hands in the cool water to meet her hands, but alas! she is ever beyond his reach, and the poor

youth languishes and dies, never dreaming that the unattainable is but his own image. His companions find his body by the pool and go sadly through the wood to gather fagots for his funeral pyre. When they came for the body it was gone, but growing where it lay was a plant with starry blossoms and a golden eye. They name it Narcissus in memory of their friend, and to this day we call it by the same name.

There is a quaint old poem called "The Cherry and the Slae," written in 1597. In it the poet Montgomery tells his opinion of poor Narcissus: —

"The painted pawn with Argus eyes
Can on his May-cock call;
The turtle wails on withered trees,
And Echo answers all,
Repeating, with greeting,
How fair Narcissus fell,
By lying and spying
His shadow in the well."

Golden daffodils were chosen by the goddesses for wreaths and chaplets and to decorate their altars. We know and love them in old-fashioned gardens, box-bordered and sweet with lilac and lavender, where the tall larkspur and hollyhock stand up like sentinels, and where the thrushes sing at dusk. The bee crawls into the deep tube and comes out covered with golden dust, which he neatly scrapes off and crowds into his two baskets, and carries away to the hive.

By the Sweet Waters of the Bosphorus, centuries ago, the Persian lover sought a flower with scarlet petals and a heart of gold. We call it the tulip. To him it was the emblem of love, and with this flower in his hand no words were needed when he sought his lady. Though in Persia, on the shores of the blue Mediterranean, and in parts of Asia, this

Trumpet Daffodil

flower is found in native wildness, we know it only as one of those glories of the plant world which rise into gorgeousness from a brown and stolid bulb. It is like the wonderful birth which takes place in the chrysalis from which a butterfly emerges, a creature so ethereal and gossamer that it looks as if the sun and a rainbow were responsible for its being.

Never has there been a plant which has occupied quite the same position and achieved the same notoriety as the tulip, and it was in the little country behind the dykes that the fancy for tulips rose to its greatest heights, and fell. Early in 1500 Dutch merchantmen had sailed to Constantinople and brought home spices and sandalwood, attar of roses and mats of richest dyes, but for the wife or sweetheart was brought a yet choicer gift, — a packet of seeds or

a handful of strange roots which the travellers said bore wonderful flowers, richer and more varied in colour than any that they knew.

These treasures were planted in the quaint Dutch gardens by the "Vrouw" herself, and were watched and tended with infinite care. It was not till 1634 that what the world knows as the "tulip mania" reached its height, and thousands of florins were not deemed too high a price to pay for a choice specimen. The Dutch were proud of their prowess on the sea, and named many of the lovely flowers after their famous admirals, as the highest honour to be conferred.

There were at one time in all Holland but two bulbs of a certain variety called *Semper Augustus*. One was treasured at The Hague, the other at Amsterdam. Doctors, merchant princes, savants vied with each other

as to who should possess them, and an incredible sum of gold, with horses and carriages added, was necessary to tempt the owner to part with one. It seems certain that it was love rather than a mere desire for barter which caused the giving up of houses and lands, cattle, and even clothes to gain possession of a pot of tulips.

Though for a century these flowers had been highly considered in Holland, there were three years when no price seemed too extravagant. Some peculiar combination of soil and air seems to dwell in that land wrested from the sea, and to-day, as two hundred years ago, the choicest and most brilliant specimens are grown there. The tulip beds near Haarlem are among the wonders of that quaint town. One may see their brilliant colours miles away, and as they bend and sway in the breeze they look like webs of

splendid silk. It is possible to wander for days through these flower gardens and enjoy their beauty.

But Holland is not alone in her love for this flower, nor in the legends which gather about it. By one of those curious anomalies the tulip has had various unpleasant qualities fastened upon it. It is the symbol of inconstancy. The poets, too, use her ill, and call her "flaunting" and "bold," comparing her disadvantageously with other flowers.

In "The Speech of Flowers," by Thomas Fuller, written about 1640, he causes the rose to complain about the favour into which the tulip has come.

"There is lately [says the rose] a flower — shal I call it so? — in courtesie I will tearme it so, though it deserve not the appellation, a Toolip, which hath engrafted the love and

Scarlet and Black Tulips

affections of most people unto it; and what is this Toolip? An ill favour wrapt up in pleasant colours; as for the use thereof in Physic no Physitian hath honoured it yet with the mention, nor with a Greek or Latin name."

Dryden had a few words of praise for her; telling of a timid lass, —

> "Some fair tulip by a storm oppressed,
> Shrinks up, and folds its silken arms to rest."

If we wish, however, to see the spot where the tulip is best loved, where she has no evil quality attached to her bright bells, we must go to Devonshire, one of the garden spots of England, a land of brightness and bloom, where the country folk still listen in the early spring for the laverock singing on the rosebush, and where clotted cream and strawberries, with a cutting from a brown loaf, seem a feast beyond all others. In

this green and fertile Devon lived a widow who owned a rose-covered cottage and loved all her flowers dearly, for she had no children. In her garden plot she grew, year after year, tulips, — great golden ones, pale pink, and scarlet ones like the heart of a glowing coal. Every day in early spring she watched and tended them, covering the young plants with warm leaves and straw when the nights were frosty. When the hawthorn just began to show its buds her tulips were swinging their bells, and passers-by on a clear night heard the softest music coming from the garden bed. They smiled as they heard it, for they knew what it was. The pixies had come out of the wood and were rocking their little brown babies to sleep in the tulip cups and singing softly as they rocked.

As long as the widow lived her

tulips were the finest in all the country thereabouts, but finally she died, and her cottage went to the next of kin, — a rough fellow who cared not a whit for flowers. He dug up the tulip bed and planted potatoes there, and he did not tend the grave of the widow. But it was not neglected. Even in winter the grass upon it seemed greener than elsewhere, and in spring people came from far and wide to see that narrow plot of ground. Every inch of it was a mass of bloom with gorgeous tulips, — the blossoms that used to wave in her garden. The pixies had gathered up the bulbs thrown out by the heir and planted them for her sake. The reason why the tulip-blooms last a whole month longer than any other blossom is so that the pixie babies shall have their cradles till they grow up, for pixie babies grow fast. At least this is the

story the good wife in Devon will tell you when you admire her tulips waving in the scented breeze.

Joseph Hall, Bishop of Exeter, sturdy flower-lover that he was as well as saver of souls, lived about seventy-five years, from 1574 to 1656, and tended his flowers in the shaded garden of his palace, and wrote about them too. Of tulips he says:—

"These Flowers are true Clients of the Sunne; how observant they are of his motion and influence. At even they shut up, as mourning for his departure, without whom they neither can nor would flourish in the morning; they welcome his rising with a cheerfull opennesse, and at noone are fully display'd in a free acknowledgment of his bounty."

Your true lover of flowers cares not a whit whether the blosson that excites his fancy is a spoiled darling

"True Clients of the Sunne"

of the garden or a wildling of the fields. In truth he almost prefers the latter as being more directly a gift of Nature, a something that has come without his volition, and not through his agency. He knows every blossom which grows within a mile of his door, and not a daffodil or a cowslip can wither and fall without his missing it. Particularly true is this of the early blossoms which come before the whole earth has put on her mantle of spring.

The impulse to pluck a flower is set in almost every breast, — if not for one's own adornment, then to deck a loved one. From such impulses sprang the use of flowers in various festivals.

In northern Europe, in those early times which are so far back that it is hard for us to appreciate their crudeness, long before the Romans had swept up from the south, or Christian ideas had crept in their wake, the rude

barbarians held their ostra, or spring festival.

So wedded to this festival had the people become, that even after Christianity came to be a power the old ceremonies were observed, and the festival of the spring was moulded to conform to the new truths, and we have our Easter, the most sacred and most hopeful festival of the Christian year.

The ceremony of dressing wells has come down from the time of the Druids.

A pretty survival of this festival has for many years been observed at Tissington, in England, where the wells are dressed on Ascension Day. Wreaths, and flowers and leaves arranged in fanciful devices, and interwoven with symbols and texts, are laid on the openings of the wells, and are allowed to remain there through all the day. In

a poem called "The Fleece" the rite is prettily described:—

"With light fantastic toe, the nymphs
Thither assembled, thither every swain;
And o'er the dimpled stream a thousand flowers,
Pale lilies, roses, violets and pinks,
Mix'd with the greens of bouret, mint and thyme,
And trefoil, sprinkled with their sportive arms,
Such custom holds along th' irriguous vales,
From Wreken's brow to rocky Dolvoryn,
Sabrina's early haunt."

A peculiar reverence was attached to the garlands woven for festival occasions, and the Romans, particularly, considered it a grave breach of decorum to wear such garlands in public. Indeed, such indecorous use of these sacred garlands was punished, and on one occasion Lucius Fulvius, a banker, having been convicted at the time of the Second Punic War of looking from his balcony with a chaplet of roses on his head, was thrown into prison, under orders from the Senate, and kept there sixteen years, until the close of the war.

A further instance of extreme severity was in the case of P. Munatius, who was condemned by the Triumvirate to be put in chains for having robbed the statue of Marsyas of its garlands, and crowning himself with them.

In the literature of the past are countless allusions to the estimation in which such garlands are held, and it may be remembered that Montesquieu remarked that it was with two or three hundred crowns of oak-leaves that Rome conquered the world.

To-day we show honour by throwing garlands to those that charm us on the mimic stage, and there are many links, if we would but search them out, between the symbolism of the past and our usages of to-day.

In some parts of England wreaths of tulips have been used till recent days to garland wells on Holy Thursday. In the north of France the cherry boughs

White Tulips

bearing the first ripe fruit are laid across the mouth of the well to insure for that season a bountiful supply of fruit. The ascribing of qualities of good or evil to various plants and trees goes back as far as there are any records. The South Sea Islanders use flowers as a part of every-day life, — for ceremonies, for adornment, for worship. They affirm that the scent of a flower is its spirit, and in order that their dead may be sustained by the fragrance they cover the grave with the sweetest flowers.

The origin of the names of plants presents a curious branch of the study of horticulture. Many are wrapped in obscurity, but tulip is from a Persian word, meaning turban, and having reference to the shape of the flower. The pretty narcissus is in memory of a foolish youth, and daffodil seems to have been a homely name given in affection to a home flower.

These charming "dwellers of the dust" become friends of long standing. One little root nurtured and tended may live as long as you do, appearing anew each spring with added numbers to glorify the garden spot. So sturdy is it that even neglect does not break its heart, nor cause it to lose hope, though its nuggets of gold may not be so numerous. Courage is a quality that always inspires admiration, and in this case it is coupled with beauty and solid worth. Shelley, that poet so susceptible to all the influences of nature, took the flowers at their true worth when he wrote: —

"The pied wind flowers and the tulip tall,
And narcissi, the fairest among them all,
Who gaze on their eyes in the stream's recess,
Till they die at their own dear loveliness."

VIOLETS.

"THER SPRANG THE VIOLETE AL NEWE."

VIOLETS occupy a conspicuous place in Greek mythology. We are told that Io was beloved of Jupiter, who, on account of Juno's jealousy, changed her into a heifer. Such common food as grass was far too gross to serve as nourishment for the sweetheart of one of the gods; therefore, as something wonderfully delicious, he created the violet, that Io might feed upon its fragrant petals. So at least we read in the old chronicles, which tell us far different and much prettier tales than can be gathered from the pages laboriously put together by scientists, who must cram a fact in every line.

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Whatever connection Io may have had with this sweet flower, it is true that its Greek name is Ion, and that, as the Athenians trace their origin to Ionia, they adopted it as their national emblem, and were much addicted to wearing violet chaplets. Besides being noted for its beauty and fragrance, they considered the flower endowed with power to ward off drunkenness, — a frequent vice among these people. That its efficacy was on occasion not sufficiently potent was shown in the case of Alcibiades, when he went to the house of Agathon, crowned with violets and ivy, and bawled aloud in the courtyard.

The weaving of chaplets was a regular profession, and the most celebrated chaplet-maker of antiquity was a woman named Glycera, who frequently challenged Pausias, the painter, to surpass her in the weaving

of flowers. Not only were the living crowned with flowers, but the beauty-loving Greeks crowned also the dead, covered their biers with garlands of choicest blossoms, and laid them to rest in graves lined with flowers. For such purposes, as now, the violet was a favourite. In Greek literature are constantly recurring such lines as these: "May many flowers grow on this newly built tomb, not the dried-up bramble nor the noxious acgipyrus, but violets and marjoram and the narcissus growing in water, and around thee, Vibrius, may all roses grow."

The only lines which have come down to us from Alcæus's ode to Sappho begin, "Violet-crowned, pure, sweetly smiling Sappho."

The Romans, ever emulating the Greeks in matters of taste and elegance, also extolled this emblem of modesty. Their greatest poets sang

its praises. Virgil, to describe the desolation of Nature when mourning the death of Daphnis, says that all the violets have perished, and in their place has sprung the sour, thorny-thistle.

Mohammed had time to give to the cultivation and study of flowers, and the violet was one of his favourites. "Flower of humility" he called it, and among his followers in the East it is still regarded as possessing on this account a peculiar sanctity. "As my religion," quoth the Prophet, "is above all others, so is the excellence of the odour of violets above all other odours. It is as warmth in winter and coolness in summer."

A thousand lovers have compared their lady-loves to this flower, which combines all the graces for which a flower should be extolled, — beauty, sweetness, modesty. Even the Span-

iard, whose mistress is renowned for the midnight blackness of her eyes and hair, appreciates the loveliness of this darling of the gods, and extols its merits and worthiness.

Gonzaga wrote thus prettily about it a century ago and more : —

"Oh ! the Florence rose is fresh and faire,
And rich the young carnations blowe,
Wreathing in Beauty's ebonne haire,
Or sighing on her breast of snow.
But onlie Violette shal twine
Thine ebonne tresses, Ladye mine."

Perfume is the soul of a flower, and such blossoms as have it in abundance are those most dearly loved, be their hue bright or dull, their size large or small, their shape graceful or otherwise. There is a single flower which escapes this ban, and is regarded with affection even though scentless. This is the pansy, in all its varieties, first cousin to the violet, and named botanically *Viola tricolor*. "The sweet

violet will have no rival among flowers if we merely seek for a delicate fragrance, but her sister, the heartsease, who is destitute of all sweetness, far surpasses her in rich dresses."

And surpasses not only in rich dress, one would add to whom the pansy is the flower of all others that rejoices in an individuality of its own, which has an expression, so to speak, in its pretty face. Pluck if you will a handful of pansies, golden-eyed, purple-hued, pied, and striped, and then amuse yourself by seeking to discover if any two of them are quite alike.

You will find that there is as much difference between them as there is between human beings, and that some are shy, while others look you in the face with a challenge and defy you to tell just where the difference lies.

It was this very characteristic of the pansy or heartease, its individuality,

Parma Violets

which endeared it to those old garden lovers who were as yet undisturbed by the doubling and trebling, and other manifestations of man's handiwork, which have come with advancing years.

The Greeks, to whom the idea of pure sylvan beauty was a meadow, speak of violets growing there. So does the great Milton, but Shakespeare knew better where to find the first-lings of the spring:

> "I know a bank where the wild thyme blows,
> Where oxlips and the nodding violet grows."

He has Perdita call the violet "dim," Milton calls it "glowing," each in his heart intent on a different point of view, for Perdita thinks of her hidden love and compares it to this shy blossom; Milton likens it to an emblem of triumphant love, and so calls it glowing. With the joy of love in his heart, Shakespeare elsewhere says,

it is "sweeter than the lids of Juno's eyes."

Extending as far back as the days of the Roman Empire, the city of Toulouse had a reputation for literature; it was the centre of Provençal song, and as late as the times of Charles IV. there were still troubadours, — those wandering minstrels who went from bower to hall, singing songs often improvised and generally original. Their members had greatly decreased, however, and those who were left formed themselves into a society which met in the garden of the Augustine monks, where they recited their ballads and songs. To fan the dying embers of song once more into a flame, a prize was offered to these Provençal troubadours of a golden violet for the best poem produced by one of them. A great multitude assembled to hear these

poems recited on May 4, 1324. The prize was given to Armand Vidal, whose verses were in honour of the Virgin. Other cities instituted similar festivals, and a violet of gold was always a prize, but no city ever gained such fame for her sweet singers as Toulouse.

At a later period, in England, an old book on the manners and customs of Elizabethan times gives also many receipts for cooling waters and other medicaments. For the "dumps," a disease which has still survived, a favourite prescription called for roses, violets, capers, feverfew, saffron, rosemary, sweet apples, scordium, wine, tobacco, and cider. Borage and bugloss expelled melancholy.

Lord Bacon, who discoursed pleasingly on gardens and flowers, has this about one violet: "That which above all others yields the sweetest smell

in the air is the violet, specially the double white violet, which comes twice a year, about the middle of April and about Bartholomew-tide."

The silver-tongued Herrick in one of his charming poems tells how the violet became blue. He pictures the flowers as young girls lovely and sweet, — so sweet, in fact, as to arouse the jealousy of Venus. She had a dispute with Cupid as to the superiority of her charms over those of her more youthful rivals, and Cupid, ever ready to stir up trouble, decided in favour of the girls. This so incensed Venus that she flew into a passion and beat the poor girls till they were quite blue!

René Rapin, the Jesuit, a voluminous writer on gardens, mingles together descriptions of flowers and all kinds of graceful tales; for instance, that the violet is Ianthis, who lurked

in valleys to shun the love of Apollo and stained her face purple to defend herself. The rose is Rhodanthe, proud of her beauty, but changed into a tree by Apollo, whilst the populace who had adored her are converted into thorns and her chief lovers into snails and butterflies.

Besides being the emblem of humility the violet is held to signify love of truth. Poor Ophelia says to the Queen: "I would give you some violets, but they withered all when my father died."

A Dutch traveller, who visited England in 1560, has much to say in his letters about English comfort and luxury. The flowers please him greatly, and he notes the floors being strewn with sweet herbs, which give great refreshment. Also "their nosegays finely intermingled with sundry sorts of fragraunte floures, in their bed chambers and privi rooms with

comfortable smell cheered me up and entirely delighted all my senses."

Not only for their sweetness were violets grown, but for utility as well, and a salad of "floures of violettes with onions and lettuce" was considered a very choice dainty. They are included with fennel and savory as ingredients for flavouring broths, also to garnish dishes. In an old receipt-book we find directions for a pudding called "mon amy;" and the cook is directed to "plant it with flowers of violettes and serve it forth."

In another ancient cook-book are directions for compounding a dish called "vyolette." It must have been a strange mixture to partake of, for you select "flowrys of vyolet, boyle hem, presse hem, bray hem smal"; add sweet milk, "floure of rys," sugar, or honey, and colour with violets.

Marie-Louise Violets

Old Parkinson, the herbalist, writing in 1656 about the flowers and simples growing in Old London, says that by the Thames' side, near to Lambeth, "grew the water violets more plentifully than in any other spot." To think of these violets, and then to call to mind the Lambeth of to-day, the home of smoky pot-works and dull gloomy buildings, where never even a blade of grass can find courage to raise its head! The Thames to-day would not recognise the Thames of 1656, with its wherries rowed by watermen, its gay barges painted and gilded and filled with parties bent on pleasure, or perhaps going down to Lambeth to gather "water violets."

Pliny, who had a terrace of violets about his villa that he might enjoy their sweetness, traces to the East the origin of perfumery. To the luxury of fresh flowers was added the

sprinkling of the guests with essences and perfumes at those feasts where each host vied with his neighbour to procure new sensations. As years passed, the love for scents of various kinds increased and spread to different countries. Doughty knights were pleased to have their doublets made of scented Spanish leather, while bits of it were sold to perfume feminine belongings.

Queen Elizabeth was very fond of all strong essences and fragrant waters. The Medicis brought from Italy into France cosmetics and perfumes, some of the latter said to conceal deadly poisons and used as a means for taking off those of whom they were anxious to be rid, so that such innocent-looking objects as a pair of scented gloves or a fragrant nosegay might conceal a death-dealing foe.

From the earliest times violets were

used to make perfumes, and were always favourites. In England court ladies as well as country dames had their still-rooms, and in these the violet was a necessary plant. My lady and her maids gathered the blossoms in baskets, brayed, distilled, mixed, and compounded with other ingredients and produced a fragrant water for the toilet-table.

Beside the liquid essences and perfumes, pomander-balls were used by our great-grandmothers instead of vinaigrettes. They were hollow balls often made of gold or silver and as large as an orange. Sometimes, indeed, oranges, a costly fruit in those times, were used, the inside being removed and a sponge with vinegar and spices inserted in its place. Perfume balls made of rose or violet leaves beaten to a pulp, mixed with sweet spices and rolled, were popular

also. The warmth of the hand caused them to exude a delicate fragrance. The violets so used were not the wild ones, which have no odour and are scornfully called "dog-violets," but the double sweet varieties. These are now becoming acclimated in America, and in many places have escaped garden bounds and run wild.

A violet, particularly a single wild one, would seem a simple flower, yet learned men have waged wordy battles as to just why this flower has been set on a long stem, why it has its peculiar shape, why the pollen has certain characteristics, and why the flower has a curved horn. What we so fondly call, in the first days of spring, the flowers of the blue violet are mere bits of prettiness, like a knot of ribbon or a fall of lace upon the costume of a charming girl, ornamental but of small use. The real work of

keeping up the species is done later on by tiny, inconspicuous flowers on short stems or runners and usually concealed among the leaves. These flowers never open, but from little pods filled with seed, which split open in autumn, in several cases not till November, shoot in spirited fashion the little seeds hundreds of times their own length away. Thus they germinate and grow, showing in the following spring the blue familiar faces we love so well.

"I love all things the seasons bring,
All buds that start, all birds that sing,
All leaves from white to jet,
All the sweet words that summer sends,
When she recalls her flowery friends,
But chief — the violet!

"I love, how much I love the rose,
On whose soft lips the south wind blows,
In pretty amorous threat;
The lily paler than the moon,
The odorous, wondrous month of June,
Yet more — the violet!

"She comes, the first, the fairest thing
That Heaven upon the earth doth fling,
Ere Winter's star is set;
She dwells behind her leafy screen,
And gives, as angels give, unseen,
So love — the violet!

"What modest thoughts the violet teaches,
What gracious boons the violet preaches,
Bright maiden ne'er forget!
But learn, and love, and so depart,
And sing thou with thy wiser heart,
'Long live the violet.'"

Our wild violets are of many colours and varieties and all of beauty. New Englanders love their "crowfoot" violets, — so called on account of the shape of the many-parted leaf. It is a lovely flower, large, lavender in colour, and with an attractive habit of running up a hillside and covering it with a mantle of bloom. The "crowfoot" thrives particularly where there is a "second growth," and the sight of it as it "strews the green lap of the new-come spring," while the bluebird whistles from the white-birch

Sweet White Violets

sapling, is enough to make one forget the most cruel winter with its snow and ice.

Though wild purple violets are generally without scent, they are clothed in the royal colour in many various shades and are dear to the heart of gentle and simple in every land. There is no country child at least who has not in the spring toilfully picked these flowers one by one, regardless of the fact that they wither with the warmth of the small hand. Even if these purple darlings of the spring hold no odour, there is a small white variety with faint purple veins which owns a delicate sweetness not imitated by any other flower. Another welcome addition to any wild garden is a yellow violet with downy leaves, which blossoms through the whole summer, be it ever so long and dry, and even shows its golden face till the frost

comes and cuts it down. Bryant extols this violet in a pretty poem:

"When beechen buds begin to swell,
And woods the bluebird's warble know,
The yellow violet's modest bell
Peeps from the last year's leaves below.

"Ere russet fields their green resume,
Sweet flower, I love, in forest bare
To meet thee, when thy faint perfume
Alone is in the virgin air.

"Of all her train, the hands of Spring
First plant thee in the watery mould,
And I have seen thee blossoming
Beside the snow-bank's edges cold.

"Thy parent sun, who bade thee view
Pale skies, and chilling moisture sip,
Has bathed thee in his own bright hue
And streaked with jet thy glowing lip.

"Yet slight thy form, and low thy seat,
And earthward bent thy gentle eye,
Unapt the passing view to meet,
When loftier flowers are flaunting nigh.

"Oft in the sunless April day
Thy early smile has stayed my walk,
But midst the gorgeous blooms of May
I passed thee on thy humble stalk.

"So they who climb to wealth forget
The friends in darker fortunes tried.
I copied them, but I regret
That I should ape the ways of pride.

"And when again the genial hour
Awakes the painted tribes of light,
I'll not o'erlook the modest flower
That made the woods of April bright."

No flower has invaded European literature like the violet, and many English poets have extolled its beauty and modesty in rondeau and triolet, ballad and sonnet.

There were one or two, however, who dared to lift up their voices in her dispraise, and among them was that doughty knight, Sir Henry Wotton, who so admired Elizabeth of Bohemia, and wrote thus in her honour in 1620 or a year or two later:—

"You meaner beauties of the night,
That poorly satisfie our eies
More by your number than your light;
You common people of the skies,
What are you when the moon shall rise?

"Ye violets that first appeare,
By your pure purple mantles known,
Like the proud virgins of the yeare,
As if the spring were all your own;
What are you when the Rose is blown?

"Ye curious chaunters of the wood,
That warble forth Dame Nature's layes,
Thinking your passion understood
By your weak accents; what 's your praise,
When Philomell her voyce shall raise?

"So, when my mistress shall be scene
In sweetness of her looks and minde;
By virtue first, then choyce a queen;
Tell me, if she was not design'd
Th' eclypse and glory of her kind?"

A pretty rondeau by Mr. Monkhouse, a tribute of the nineteenth century, runs as follows: —

"VIOLET.

"Violet delicate, sweet,
Down in the deep of the wood,
Hid in thy still retreat,
Far from the sound of the street,
Man and his merciless mood: —

"Safe from the storm and the heat,
Breathing of beauty and good
Fragrantly, under thy hood,
Violet.

"Beautiful maid discreet.
Where is the mate that is meet,
Meet for thee — strive as he could —
Yet will I kneel at thy feet,
Fearing another one should,
Violet!"

In many parts of rural Germany the custom still obtains of decking the cradles of children and the bridal beds of young girls with wreaths of violets, — a ceremony which is known to have been used among the Celts as well as the Greeks. In Brandenburg and Silesia the violet is held as a specific against ague, while nearly everywhere to dream of this flower is sure to bring good luck.

There is no country, however, where the violet is held in such affection as in France. It is associated with the tragic fate of one of the greatest men that ever lived, — Napoleon Bonaparte.

Four flowers only in the long list

of blossoms which decorate the earth have entered into politics: the rose in England, the lily in France, the chrysanthemum in Japan, and lastly the violet, which was more closely associated with one man than with the country. Following the lead of their illustrious kinsman, the Bonaparte family adopted it as their emblem.

After Napoleon's banishment to Elba the violet became more prominent than ever, and his adherents spoke of him among themselves as "Caporal la Violette," or "Papa la Violette," as significant of the fact that he would return in the spring.

These hopes were realised: the violets bloomed and he returned. As he re-entered the Tuilleries on March 20, 1815, after his escape from Elba, where he had hurried from the coast

The Hero of the Violet

in forced marches, the magic of his name and his eloquent proclamations opening one city after another, he found his beloved violets everywhere. The ladies assembled to meet him wore violet-coloured gowns and carried great bunches of these flowers, which they showered upon Napoleon as he mounted the broad steps of the palace. Bushels and bushels of violets were thrown beneath his feet as he walked, but alas! though the return was happily accomplished, the stay was almost as brief as the life of a flower. The sad word "Waterloo" closes a career quite unexampled for its heights and depths, where this bewildered, despairing man lost everything save honour and life. At the time of his return, little pictures of a bunch of violets were sold everywhere upon the streets. Among the flowers and leaves were to be found profiles

of Napoleon, Marie Louise, and the little King of Rome. For the sake of this grey-eyed man of destiny this flower has always remained dear to the Frenchman's heart, and others have risen, reigned, and died whose adherence to it have made it still further an Imperial flower.

At the death of Napoleon's only son, he who had been christened with such wild rejoicing "King of Rome," violets were again used, though he died in an unfriendly land, a sad and lonely lad, deprived of parents, home, and name. In the irony of fate, Marie Louise, Napoleon's second wife, retired after his misfortunes to her own Duchy of Parma, whence emanated the sweet double violets that Napoleon had loved.

When the beautiful Eugénie became Empress her wedding wreath was vio-

lets. When Napoleon III. died these flowers were woven into a pall for his coffin. So indicative of the Imperial family had they become that, in 1874, the French Republic decreed that not only no photograph of the Prince Imperial should be circulated, but no representation of either violets or bees! As well prohibit violets from blooming and bees from seeking them.

At the time that Victor Hugo died and was buried in the Pantheon in Paris, his tomb was heaped as high as a man's head with violets in wreaths and bunches.

The wreaths which decorate the statue on the Place de la Concorde in Paris, which is emblematic of the lost provinces of Alsace and Lorraine, are usually of violets, and it is the favourite flower for buttonhole or bouquet.

The growing of violets has become a great industry, and is nowhere more successfully operated than around the city of Potsdam, near Berlin, where there are more palaces to the square mile than in any other city in the world. In fact, only the very ornamental and the intensely practical exist in this ancient Wendish town, whose history goes back almost to the beginning of things. The ornamental is represented by the Old Palace, Sans Souci, the New Palace, the Marble Palace, Babelsburg, and half-a-dozen others, while the practical takes the form of miles of market-gardens and violet farms.

Very many violets are grown near Nice in France to be made into essence. The beds, which are laid out in gardens and shaded by orange and lemon trees, draw from the fragrant

air that fans their petals a new spicy sweetness which they yield up in death.

In the old cathedral town of Canterbury, England, in a small by-street, is a quaint shop where is made a perfume called "Wood Violets." Crowned heads vie with each other to buy this essence, which is distilled in small quantities after the formula of an old receipt, the secret of which is jealously guarded. So great is the demand for the amount made that it is almost as costly as attar of roses, but it is indeed as sweet as violets which have blown in the shadow of the woods.

Would you really pluck violets in a place lovely enough to have been the spot where they first bloomed for Juno's sake, walk some mild spring morning in the sheltered paths of the Boboli Gardens at Florence, and see

them bluing the grass, their fragrance making sweet the air.

Winds wander and dews drip earthward;
Rains fall, suns rise and set;
Earth whirls and all but to prosper
A poor little violet.

LOWELL.

LILIES.

"THE FLOWER OF FAITH."

Nymphæa Odorata

"Bear a lily in thy hand,
Gates of brass will not withstand
The touch of that same magic wand."

THE association of certain ideas with certain flowers dwells in the mind of every one of us, and the lily in its many forms is perhaps more closely entwined with religion, Christian and pagan, than any other flower.

In the first garden of all, according to the Talmud, there dwelt with Adam, before Eve was sent to comfort him, a certain golden-haired woman named Lilith, whose fatal charm lay in her honey-coloured hair. Her emblem was a lily. Diana, cool as moonlight, and Juno, the queen of heaven, both have the lily as their flower.

With the ancient races of Greece and Rome the lily was a favourite for certain ceremonies, weddings chiefly, when the priest was supplied with two chaplets composed of lilies and ears of corn, which he placed on the heads of bride and groom to typify purity and abundance.

In the Bible the references to this flower are frequent, and it always symbolises sweetness and purity. From the days of the earliest Crusades pilgrims to Palestine have sought in vain for that lily before which the glory of even Solomon faded. The temple of Solomon was decorated by Hiram with sculptured lilies and pomegranates, and in Hebrew the name Susannah signifies a lily. Shushan, the city of scriptural and Persian fame, gains its name from this same flower, which is everywhere and in every tongue celebrated for its loveliness.

The white lily, often called Saints', or Annunciation, lily, was dedicated to the Virgin as emblematic of her purity and beauty, and it is regarded as a native of the Holy Land. It is always used at the Feast of the Visitation, July 2, which was instituted by Pope Urban in commemoration of the visit paid by Mary to her cousin Elizabeth.

If you wander through the catacombs of Rome you will often find this flower portrayed on the tombs of Christian maidens. The sybil who announced the Incarnation holds this flower; St. Joseph bears a lily in his hand, and in many old paintings of the Last Judgment is shown a lily on one side of the Judge and a sword on the other.

This flower has been often chosen as the emblem of different orders, or societies. One of the very earliest

was "The Order of the Lily of Navarre, instituted by Prince Garcia, the sixth of that name, in the city of Nagera, A. D. 1048, where the image of the Virgin Mary issuing out of a lily was discovered in the time of the King's illness, who thereupon suddenly recovered his health, and, in token of gratitude, instituted the Order of Knights of St. Mary of the Lily, consisting of eight and thirty knights whereof he was chief. Each of these weareth a lily on his breast, made of silver and a double chain of gold interlaced with the Gothish letter M, which stands for Mary. At the end of the chain hangeth a lily carrying the same letter crowned."

In 1234 Louis IX. of France instituted an order of knighthood, the members of which wore a chain of broom flowers entwined with white lilies, signifying humility and purity.

Lily of the Valley

On a cross suspended from a chain were the words, "He exalteth the humble." Long has the lily been used in heraldry, and it became the peculiar flower of the royal House of Bourbon.

To do the lily justice, we must turn back the pages of history a while and return to those far-away times when the victorious Romans crossed the Alps and built their villas by the waters of the Loire and the Moselle, and even in England. With their love of beauty and luxury their gardens were not neglected, and many trees, flowers, and shrubs were brought by them from their southern land and cultivated.

Who would think that war, defeat, and dispersion would have an effect on such simple things as flowers? Yet they did: the Roman Empire fell, and the Teutonic invasion swept away villa and garden and laid waste many

a spot which had been garlanded with bloom; and so, many species were lost and had to be re-introduced. You will wonder how the flowers came again to the land which had been swept bare. It is a pretty tale, for they crept in in the wake of Christianity. The very earliest comers from the south were the monks, who came in little bands and gradually built monasteries, and horticulture revived by their efforts. Within the walls of every monastery was included a garden, for vegetables were so important a part of the monks' diet that it was as necessary as sleeping-cells. The monks were skilled gardeners, and if they gave their chief attention to vegetables the physic garden was well tended, and there grew blossoming plants as well as simples and herbs.

Even in times of war the monasteries were respected and the gardens

grew apace, and, before long, flowers were grown to deck the altar, and none more lovingly than "the lady lily looking gently down."

At first, in these troublous times, the castles and fortresses of war-lords were built for defence, and in places as inaccessible as possible. In these crowded courtyards was no room for posies; hardly a blade of grass dared show its head between the stones. But, by and by, times grew less fierce, and then gardens were planted without the walls, for food plants only, it is true, but gradually including my lady's bed of flowers, when it became safe to cultivate them. So, for a second time the sweet white lily crossed the Alps.

Under the great head "lily" are classed many plants which do not strictly belong to this family, and among them are the amaryllis flowers, many of them of gorgeous hues.

Almost more than any other flower does the lily depend on the beauty of its blossom alone for favour, as the foliage in most varieties is spare and inconspicuous.

"Of all colours, white is the prevailing one; and of white flowers a considerably larger proportion smell sweet than of any other colour, namely 14.6 per cent." So says Charles Darwin, and the reason given is that they may attract the insects, which have so large a work to do in keeping up the species.

The most brilliant members of this family come from China, Japan, and Burma, and in all there are about two thousand species. There are many pretty names among them, like the Lily-of-the-Incas, a bright flower which makes gay many of the warmer parts of the New World. The Lily-of-the-Palace is another native of America,

Lilium Harrisii

while the sweet yellow day lily, so common in old-fashioned gardens, is called variously St. Michael's lily and Laricon-fancy.

The tiger-lily, with its lurid hue and ugly brown spots, has had thrust upon it an antiquity it does not deserve. Not till as late as 1804 were the bulbs brought to England by Captain Kirkpatrick, who obtained them in eastern Asia. They shared with the far handsomer Japan lilies the honour of being among the first Oriental lilies introduced into European gardens. It was some years later before their baleful blooms crept into our gardens, from many of which they have escaped and run flaunting down the roadside. We have a far more beautiful native lily of our own which glorifies and makes glad the waste places and which we call Turk's cap, or turban lily, from its shape; there is also the brilliant flame

or wood lily, which blossoms as vividly as a torch. The Easter lily, as we call that sweet white flower which we have come to associate with this joyous festival, is a comparatively new comer to our shores. About 1875 some bulbs were brought by a Philadelphia woman and given to a florist of that city. In the course of a few years they had increased greatly and were brought up by an enterprising florist who named them after himself, *Lilium Harrisii*, and who introduced them all over the country. The lily tribe is spoken of by Linnaeus as the nobles or patricians of the vegetable kingdom, and another and older writer says that the flowers should be used "to deck up gardens, the bosoms of the beautiful, garlands and crowns for pleasure."

In Spain they tell that the lily can restore to human form those who have

been transformed into beasts. The lily-of-the-valley has had many emblems conferred upon it, all of which are equally appropriate. Thus, in reference to the bright, hopeful season of spring, in which it blossoms, it is regarded as the symbol of the return of happiness, while its delicate perfume has long been indicative of sweetness, and its snow-white flowers of purity. Old Gerarde sayeth, "Flowers of Lily-of-the-Valley being close stopped up in a glass, and put into an ant-hill and taken away a month after, ye shall find a liquor in the glass which, being outwardly applied, helpeth the gout." It is a matter of speculation what the ant-hill had to do with distilling the liquor.

In Japan, where flowers have rank, white flowers are the aristocrats. In Maud's garden white lilies bloomed, and Landor writes, "I like white

flowers better than any others," and he names the lily first of all. There is a Jewish legend which says that Judith bound a wreath of white lilies in her hair to avert evil when she went to the tent of Holofernes.

All the poets have sung the lilies' praises.

It is not growing like a tree
In bulk, doth make man better be;
Or standing long an oak, three hundred year,
To fall a log at last, dry, bald, and sere;
A lily of a day
Is fairer far in May,
Although it fall and die that night —
It was the plant and flower of Light.
In small proportions we just beauties see;
And in short measures life may perfect be.

BEN JONSON.

Milton paints a pretty picture of Sabrina twisting lilies in her amber-coloured hair.

"Sabrina fair,
Listen where thou art sitting
Under the glassy, cool, translucent wave,
In twisted braids of lilies knitting
The loose train of thy amber-dropping hair."

Calla Lily

There is a little poem by Dr. Van Dyke called "The Lily of Yorrow," which embodies the principles of the Lotus-eaters. He pictures the search for this marvellous lily, and how the finder of it forgets home and friends, and passes beyond the ken of those who loved him. The largest flower in the world is the lily named in honour of Queen Victoria, the Victoria Regia, and it is a native of Brazil. In fact, it is almost too large for beauty, and one stands amazed at its enormous blossoms and its boat-like leaves. The flowers are rose-white, and sometimes measure two feet across, whilst the leaves are five feet in diameter and have a rim which turns up five inches. It is said that they will support the weight of a full-grown man.

In Greek and Roman mythology the water-lily was Nymphea, a water god-

dess, and the leaves of these floating beauties are the only leaves in the whole vegetable kingdom which are known as pads. The reason given for this is that in Sanscrit the word water-lily is *padma*, and in some way it has clung in a mutilated form to our water-nymph.

One of the greatest charms of this species of lily is the length of time during which it glorifies our waterways. From June until September the bud rises from the muddy depths, up, up, toward the light and sun, until at last it bursts into bloom, a perfect flower.

There is a pretty Indian legend about the water-lily, and among the Lenape, when the braves are sitting about the camp-fire and the young girls whisper to each other, this is one of the oft-repeated tales.

For as lóng as one can remember there has been a group of stars shining brightly in the heavens, called the

Seven Sisters. If you count carefully you will see that there are but six, and this is because poor Merope, the brightest of all these bright sisters, fell from her high estate. One day, as Merope trimmed her torch so that it should burn brilliantly at night, she said to Alcyone, her best-loved sister:

"What is there over beyond the edge of the sky?"

"Indeed, sister," answered Alcyone, "how should I know?"

"This very night I shall look down," said Merope; "one grows weary of holding for ever a torch."

Alcyone protested, but wayward Merope had her will, and that night leaned far over the edge of heaven to see what was beneath. She beheld the earth slowly turning about, and as she watched, strange sights passed before her eyes. She saw men swayed by hate and greed, she saw women

proud and vain, she saw one man kill another for gold.

Merope was sad and drew back, but having tasted of the knowledge of strange sights, the next night she looked again. As she leaned far over the bar of heaven, Alcyone grasped one hand, and with the other Merope held low the flaming torch. This night she saw happier scenes — children at play, happy homes and lovers.

Far out in the forest she saw men with feathers in their hair and skins of animals for clothes gathering about a fire. In the centre of the circle sat Sacarrappa, the greatest brave of all, who, they said, had been brought to the tribe on the back of a gull.

Long they talked of war, and Merope shuddered till she saw from one of the most distant tepees a young girl steal forth and glide swiftly through the wood. Her little feet clad in soft skin

Lilium Auratum

made no noise. Her skirt and bodice were bright with a pattern of porcupine quills, woven in the shape of roses. She reached the side of a small stream, and, as she paused, from the tall reeds near its edge rose a youth who called her "Little Rosebud," and spoke to her of love.

They whispered long, and finally he persuaded her to come next night and fly with him into the wilderness, for the Lenape do not let their maidens wed with braves from other tribes, and this warrior came from the far south.

When Little Rosebud reached her tepee in safety, Merope sighed, and wished that she, too, had a lover so stalwart and strong. When the next evening came Merope was ready with her torch, and, as before, Alcyone held her hand as she leaned far out over the bar of heaven.

She saw the lovers meet, she saw him

help Little Rosebud into the canoe, and she saw the camp all in confusion when the absence of the chief's daughter was discovered, and many armed warriors hastened in pursuit. The night was so dark Merope feared the lovers could not see their course, so she leaned farther out, her hand slipped from Alcyone's, and she fell headlong through space, right into the stream where the lovers had passed. As her torch touched the water it was shivered into a thousand sparks, and lo, each one of these became a water-lily, pure white, and bearing in its heart a star of gold.

So fast the lilies grew that the pursuers could not push their canoes among them, and the tough stems of the leaves impeded the paddles. This is how poor Merope fell, leaving but six sisters in the Pleiades, and this is how our sweetest lily came to us.

The Wallachians have a superstition that every flower has a soul, and that the water-lily, sweet and stainless, blooms at the gate of Paradise to judge the rest and to inquire strictly what they have done with their odours.

It is said in the Rhine district that if you gather a water-lily, repeating some magic verses, it will keep witches away.

Our own fair land is peculiarly rich in these water nymphs or water-lilies, for it is the only country where may be found blooming white, yellow, pink and blue water-lilies. Row but once down some stream where these sweet flowers grow, before sunrise. You will find naught but the floating leaves pricked here and there by the pointed green buds. Over the same stream row once again when the sun is coming up warm and golden, and see the lilies burst open, clothing the surface of the water with a field of fragrant whiteness.

John Banister Tabb has embodied in a trifle of verse a fancy of his own concerning the water-lily. This is how it runs: —

"Whence, O fragrant form of light,
Hast thou drifted through the night,
Swanlike, to a leafy nest,
On the restless waves, at rest?

"Art thou from the snowy zone
Of a mountain-summit blown,
Or the blossom of a dream,
Fashioned in the foamy stream?

"Nay, — methinks the maiden moon,
When the daylight came too soon,
Fleeing from her bath to hide,
Left her garment in the tide."[13]

Nor is the lily the child only of the lowlands and fragrant meads; she climbs to high altitudes, and hangs her bell of sweetness there. When on the dizzy heights which bound some precipice, she lays aside the shrinking manner of lowly surroundings, and takes on that daring look which is peculiar to all flowers which dwell on the limits of perpetual snow and ice.

Victoria Regia

"Alpine plants possess the charm of endless variety, and include things widely different — tiny orchids, tree-like moss, and ferns that peep from crevices of alpine cliffs, often so small that they seem to cling to the rocks for shelter, not daring to throw forth their fronds with airy grace; bulbous plants, from lilies to bluebells; evergreen shrubs, perfect in leaf, blossom, and fruit, yet so small that a glass would make a house for them; dwarfest creeping plants, spreading over the brows of rocks, draping them with loveliest colour, rockfoils and stonecrops no bigger than mosses, and like them, mantling the earth with green carpets in winter; in a word, alpine plants embrace nearly every type of the plant life of northern lands."

Robert Southey, writing in "The Doctor," paints, more than a century ago, a picture of a garden, and it might

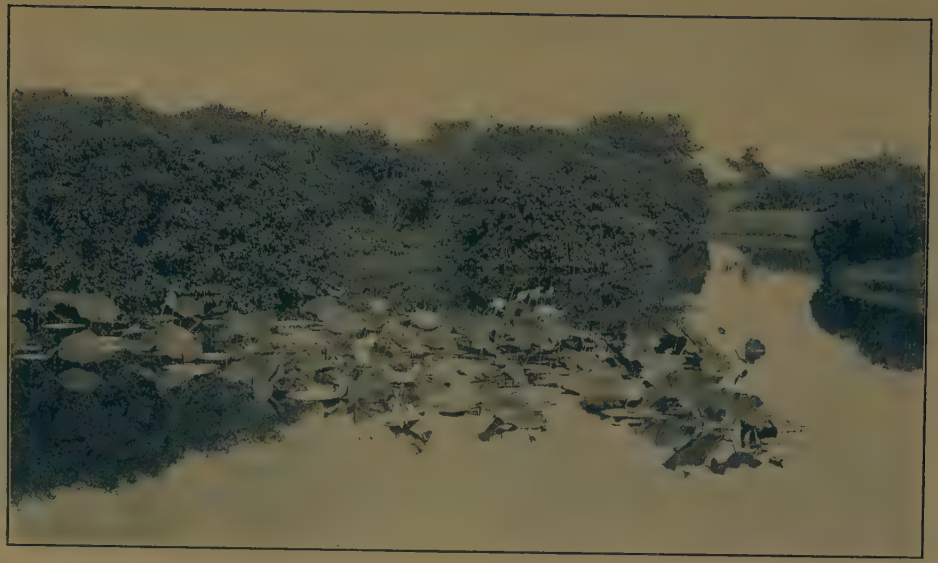
well stand for a model of one to-day, with its richness of colour and sweetness.

"Neither Miss Allison nor her niece would have taken any pleasure in a garden like this (a French formal one), which had nothing of a garden but the name. They both delighted in flowers: the aunt because to her flowers were 'redolent of youth,' and never failed to awaken tender recollections; Betsy for an opposite reason, having been born and bred in London, —a nosegay there had seemed always to bring her a foretaste of those enjoyments for which she was looking forward with eager hope. They had stocked their front-garden, therefore, with the gayest and the sweetest flowers that were cultivated in those days,—larkspurs, both of the giant and dwarf variety, and of all colours; sweet-williams of the richest hues; monk's-hood for its stately growth,—

Betsy called it the dumbledore's delight, and was not aware that the plant, in whose helmet, rather than cowl-shaped flowers, that busy and best-natured of all the insects appears to revel more than in any other, is the deadly aconite of which she reads in poetry; the white lily, and the fleur-de-lys; peonies which are still the glory of the English garden; stocks and gillyflowers which make the garden sweet as the gales of Arabia; wallflowers, which for a while are little less fragrant, and not less beautiful; pinks and carnations added their spicy odours; roses, red and white, peeped in at the lower casements, and the jassamine climbed to the windows of the chambers above. You must nurse your flowers if you would have them flourish, unless you happen to have a gardener who is as fond of them as yourself."

If you wish to unlock the realms of poetry and romance you must turn to that famous lily of the East, the sacred Lily of the Nile, the lotus. There is hardly a tale in Oriental mythology where it has not a place. Buddha is called "The White Lotus of the Good Law" and is always shown holding a lily in each hand. In Egypt this flower was represented as the throne of Osiris, the god of day.

The true Egyptian lotus is either blue or white; the pink variety was brought to Egypt in Roman times, and does not now grow there wild. It is a native of southeastern Asia, and was cultivated in Egypt for food. The roots of the blue lotus are also edible, and this fact is said to have been made known by Isis to her worshippers. The buds and flowers of this species are often depicted on monuments as early as three thousand years before Christ.



Lotus Pond

When the tomb of Rameses II. was opened in 1881, some of the petals of both pink and white lotus flowers were found. He reigned 1300 B. C., and these frail bits of a flower survived where monuments of stone and brass had crumbled to pieces. The lotus has been invested with many sacred attributes. On the Nile it meant fertility. The language of the lotus reads, "A tree whose fruit is so sweet that when foreigners once taste of it they forget their own country."

Herodotus says that when the waters of the Nile rise to their extreme heights and all fields are overflowed, there appears above the surface an immense quantity of lotus plants, which the natives cut and dry. They bake the seeds and grind the dried roots into a sort of flour. In Plutarch there is a story of a King of Sparta who went to visit the Egyptian Court. What

seems to have delighted him most was the lotus, which in the form of wreaths decorated the brows of the guests. A favourite fashion was to have a single bud hang down upon the centre of forehead. It was also the custom to present one to each guest, and the host had a bowl of them placed in front of him.

In the Flowery Kingdom itself, where every bird and flower is loved and tended, what wonder that this beautiful bloom holds a place? Here, too, is the lily, the flower of faith, the sacred flower of Buddha, seen always in the temples dedicated to that god. Seldom are they living flowers, but are reproductions in bronze, brass, gold, or coloured papers. By the fingers of the artistic Japanese are made flowers of exquisite beauty, which seem to partake of the joyous nature of the worshippers of Buddha, — something

unusual to western eyes. There is nothing grim, austere, or solemn in their faith. The temples are bright, and the people take their religion cheerfully and with smiles. Not only in the temples is the lotus flower portrayed, but it is a common device upon the tombstones, a favourite pattern being two blossoms with their stalks entwined. The little Buddhist children of Japan have a god of their own who is represented as standing on a rosy lotus. His name is Jizo-Sama, and when the souls of children are frightened by demons they hasten to Jizo, and he hides them in his great sleeves and drives the demons away.

On festival days the lotus buds and flowers are sold in immense bunches supported in frames of bamboo. The leaves are sold separately, and are used to wrap the food which is to be offered

to the spirits of loved ones. With the Japanese the word "garden" does not always signify a place where plants grow. It may be acres in extent or it may be encompassed by the walls of a tiny dish. It is always a product of art and is nearly always beautiful.

In the gardens of the well-to-do you will generally find a pondlet where there are beautiful water-lilies whose bright green leaf-disks float peacefully upon the surface, and many lotus plants of two kinds, pink and white, grow there also. It is a delight to watch every phase of the marvellous growth of these plants, from the first unrolling of the leaf to the fall of the last flower. On rainy days they are particularly worth studying. Their great cup-shaped leaves, swaying high above the pond, catch and hold the rain. After the water reaches a certain height the stem bends, and the leaf,

Where the lotus idly floats

tipping, pours the water out with a splash and then straightens again. Not only the lilies find a home in these sweet ponds, but there are frogs, little creatures much beloved by the Japanese, who have written many poems about them and their songs.

In such a setting no wonder the lotus blossoms in beauty in Japan. The paintings of Paradise made by Japanese artists show the happy souls of the dead, gardening; they fondle the lotus buds, sprinkling their petals with something mysterious, helping the buds to blossom.

In Siam the lotus is the national flower and interwoven inextricably with its poetry and religion. There are both the pink and white varieties, and as with the Japanese, they are reproduced in many materials.

Outside of the city of Bangkok one can sail for miles over flooded fields

covered with the white blossoms. The royal lotus ponds are not in the city of Bangkok, at the King's palace, but some miles outside the town, in a beautiful garden where there is a temple and pleasure palace. Almost every religious ceremony uses the lotus, and the Siamese have a legend that when Buddha appeared as a man encircled by a halo of glory, the earth blossomed spontaneously and in profusion with this beautiful flower. In the funeral processions the lotus is borne on tridents.

Who can begrudge the lily the love and veneration which has been showered upon her, or fail to give her the well-won title of "The Flower of Faith?"

Pekinensis Rubrum Plenum

ROSES.

"HIGH IN PARADISE, BY THE FOUR RIVERS, THE FIRST ROSES BLEW."

The Mrs. John Laing

THE history of the Queen of Flowers goes back to far-away times and to distant lands; it is woven in with the loves and lives of many peoples, yet it comes down the highways of Time with never a voice raised except in praise.

Born in the East, the rose is a child of the sun. It has, nevertheless, garlanded the whole world, even to the regions of snow and ice, where the Esquimaux during their brief summer tend and gather it to deck their persons and their homes. In Iceland, so says M. Boitard, where vegetation is scanty in the extreme, a pale cup-like rose is found, as dear to its possessors as the hundred-leaved flower with

which the beautiful Circassian, dwelling in the northwest of Asia, wreathes her brows. In Egypt we find sea-roses and tea-roses and the delicate little rock-rose, whose lovely blooms clothe barren spots only.

All the world over and from time immemorial the rose has been the flower of Love. The old song runs,

"My luv is like the red, red rose,"

and it is a flower of this colour that the lover always chooses when he wishes to give a token to the one who is the fairest and dearest in his eyes. "Go, lovely rose," he whispers as he speeds his flower on its mission,

"Tell her that wastes her time and me
That now she knows,
When I resemble her to thee,
How sweet and fair she seems to be."

More than with any other flower does the colour of the rose have special significance. Red is love, white is

silence, yellow speaks jealousy. One of the many legends connected with the rose tells that it became white through being bathed with the tears of mourners who sought the sweetest flower to lay in the hands of their dead. A prettier conceit declares that all roses were white until one day young Cupid was dancing among them. In his merry sport he upset a glass of wine, and it dyed the roses upon which it fell red, its own colour. Another legend tells the story of a holy little maid of Bethlehem who was doomed to death. When the stakes were heaped around her the fire would not burn, but the brands which had been flaming turned to red roses, and those which had not caught, to white. From this time forth roses, red and white, were martyrs' flowers. The Turks say that red roses sprang from the blood of Mohammed.

In Roumania they tell this little tale to account for the blush rose: A fair young princess came one day to bathe in the silver waves of the sea. So lovely and full of grace was she that the sun paused in his journey and looked down on her. As long as she sported he stood stock still in the sky. This put Night in a bad temper, and she complained to the Lord of the Universe. He ordered the sun to continue its course, but the Orb of Day paid no attention. In anger the Lord of the Universe changed the Princess into a rose, and her doom is to blush and hang her head whenever the sun gazes on her.

The Rose of Sharon is sung of in the "Song of Songs." The Rose of Jericho has been called "Saint Mary's Rose," and is regarded with special reverence, as the sacred legend says it first blossomed at Christ's birth,

Soleil d' Or

closed at his crucifixion, and opened again at the resurrection. Tradition also affirms that where Joseph and Mary rested during their flight into Egypt roses of Jericho sprang up.

The rosary of beads for counting prayers is not peculiar to the Catholic Church, nor is it of comparatively modern origin. So far back does the use of the rosary go that we must follow it to India, to Japan and China, where the Buddhists used them in devotional exercises. There is a little story as to how the name of Rosary came to be applied to this string of beads, which you will hear in Munich, that fountain-head of so many legends.

A youth who dwelt in a land where flowers bloomed in profusion was accustomed to make a wreath of roses every day, and place it upon the head of Our Lady's statue. In course of time he became a monk, and in the

cloister he no longer had time to observe this practice. This distressed him much, and he asked counsel of an aged priest, who advised him to say his Aves every evening, which would be accepted by Our Lady in lieu of the garlands which he could no longer provide.

So from this time on the young monk said an extra prayer, and one day he was sent on a journey, in the course of which he had to pass through a dark and lonely wood, where, unknown to him, some robbers laid in wait for chance travellers. Quite unsuspicious, the young monk pursued his way, until he suddenly remembered that his Aves were not said, and he stopped to say them. Then, to their surprise, the robbers saw a most glorious lady stand before him, and take from the kneeling monk fifty beautiful roses, which she wove

into a wreath and placed on her head The robbers, conscience stricken at the vision, renounced their evil ways, and were converted to a better life.

Achilles Tatius, writing "The Loves of Clitophon and Leucippe" in the fifth century, compares his love to all kinds of charming flowers.

"Leucippe's countenance faire surpassed the rare and exquisite splendour of the peacocke, nay the whole garden, for in her forehead were daffodillies, in her cheekes roses, in her eyes violets, her locks were more curled than the twining Ivie, and every part held such correspondence with the Garden, that I may truly say the best flowers were in her face."

William Lawson, gardener and writer, gives too his partial favours for "The Rose red, damaske, velvet and double, double province Rose, the sweet muske Rose double and single,

the double and single white Rose. The violette nothing behinde for smelling sweetly, and a 1000 more will provoke your content."

Thomas Fuller (1608-1661), laden with offices and dignities, yet had time to write of his beloved flowers. In his "Antheologia, or The Speech of Flowers; partly Morall, partly Misticall," he discourses thus of a "small Scantlin of some three Acres."

"For there was yellow Marigolds, Wallflowers, Auriculusses, Gold Knobs, and abundance of other namelesse Flowers, which would pose a Nomenclator to call them by their distinct denominations. There was White, the Dayes Eye, white roses, Lillyes etc. Blue, Violet, Irisse, Red Roses, Pionies etc. All the children of Flora being summoned there, to make their appearance at a great solemnity."

Shakespeare mentions the rose more

Golden Gate Roses

frequently than any other flower, and always as the symbol of what is lovely and fair. On every occasion, whether of joy or sorrow, this lovely flower has a place.

The luxurious Greeks and Romans crowned themselves with roses when they feasted; they bound these flowers about their bowls of wine; they scattered them upon the table. The lavish Cleopatra decked her banquet hall with roses for a feast and did not consider what we would call a thousand dollars too much to expend on their frail beauty. Nero "the Terrible" spent a hundred times that amount for garlands and rose wreaths for a single dinner. Not content with the roses themselves, this same Nero showered his guests with rose-water, and when he in his turn honoured a noble by dining with him, the host was compelled to have the fountains

play rose-water. The Romans set a special value on this blossom as a funeral flower, and left directions in many instances that their graves should be planted with them. In China the rose and anemone are chosen for this same office.

The Legend of Fair Margaret and Sweet William declares, to the accompaniment of a doleful tune, that out of her heart grew a white rose, and out of his a brier.

In Persia, where the rose flourishes in great beauty, there is a wealth of romance woven about it. The rose and the nightingale are for ever linked together. A bit of folklore declares that whenever the rose is plucked the nightingale utters a plaintive cry because it cannot endure to see the object of its love injured. The Persian poet Attar tells a legend of all the birds appearing before Solomon and

complaining that they could not sleep because of the wailing of the nightingale. When Solomon asked the bird if this were so, the nightingale replied that his love for the rose was the cause of his grief.

Not only do the Persians deck the person, the house, or the grave with roses, but they literally prepare a bed of them. On the Sinan Nile these flowers grow in unequalled beauty and fragrance, and from their leaves, dried carefully in the sun, are made mattresses for people of wealth to recline upon. The natives scatter rose-leaves in the water of the bath, and from its sweet petals they distil an oil that is the most precious and penetrating scent known, and even in the land where it is made it is sold by the drop.

There are many fanciful tales as to how attar of roses first came to be

made. Noorjehan Begum, the favourite wife of Jehan-Geer, is given credit for its discovery. Walking one day in her garden, which was as beautiful and fragrant as wealth and love could make it, she felt oppressed by the heat. Through the garden ran a little stream of pure rose-water, and to make it still sweeter the petals of pale-pink roses were scattered upon it. Noorjehan threw herself down beside this stream, and having nothing to do but count her fingers and toes and tell over the jewels she wore, she soon wearied of this labour and her eyes rested on the flowing water. She saw some oily drops on its surface, and glad to relieve her ennui in any way, called on a slave to skim them off. The only thing at hand with which to do this was a veil of gauze, which was bound about the slave's head, and with this she removed the offending drops.

When she raised the veil to bind it in its place she noticed the sweet odour it bore, which came from the little oily drops. She told Noorjehan of it, and her mistress also delighted in the sweetness, and sent for a sea-shell and a tiny flask. With her own hands she gathered the drops as they floated past. Day after day she amused herself by gathering this sweetness, till the precious little flask was full. Then she gave it to her lord. Jehan-Geer seems to have been of a commercial turn of mind, for straightway he set slaves to work to make the precious oil. Yet Noorjehan each day gathered it drop by drop from her rose-bordered stream, declaring it was sweeter far than that extracted by the slaves.

Few roses have anything like romance connected with their early history. It is usually a matter of budding,

or patient waiting on seedlings, but the York and Lancaster rose has a history all its own, and has just been rescued from oblivion. The details of its early propagation in England are not known. The story goes that when the rival houses of York and Lancaster, after fighting from 1445 to 1486, decided to end the Wars of the Roses, and seal their truce by the marriage of Elizabeth of York and Henry the Seventh, the red and white roses which had been the badges of their fealty were blended in one flower, which showed both the red and the white in its striped petals.

For many a long year on both sides of the water this was a favourite ornament in old-fashioned gardens, but not being easily rooted it gradually died out. After more than twenty years of patient effort, the rose has been built up again, and once more tells the old story of its origin.

York and Lancaster Rose

Wordsworth, in one of his poems, speaks of this rose. In some of the old "Herballs" this rose is mentioned also. Wordsworth's verse goes as follows: —

"From town to town, from tower to tower.
The red rose is a gladsome flower;
Her thirty years of winter past
The white rose is revived at last,
She lifts her head to endless Spring
For everlasting blossoming;

"Both roses flourish, red and white,
In love and sisterly delight.
The two that were at strife are blended,
And all old sorrows now are ended.
Joy, joy to both! but most to her
Who is the flower of Lancaster!"

The House of Stuart bore the white rose as its emblem, and June 10 was set apart as "White Rose Day," for it was the birthday of the unhappy James, the Pretender. A full-blown rose was chosen by the Tudors for their flower, and it blossoms out in wood and stone all over the historic monuments of England.

For many years in Germany and in

Scandinavia the rose was considered a mystic flower, under the particular protection of dwarfs and elves, who in turn were ruled by the Lord of the Rose Garden, King Laurin. Four golden gates led to this magical garden, and when they were closed woe to him who should enter there. If any one should dare to pluck a rose, both a hand and a foot were forfeit, for "Thus Laurin, King of Dwarfs, rules within his land." In Germany, as well as in Italy and France, it is whispered that if a maid is desirous of having rosy cheeks she must plant a drop of blood beneath a rose-bush.

One of the prettiest ceremonies connected with the rose was the "Tribute of Roses" which was held in France. In early days the Parliament, placed between the Church and royalty, formed one of the great powers of the State. It was not always in Paris, but

made an annual tour, sitting in various cities. The occasion was ever gorgeous, for royalty followed it, and the ladies on their palfreys, clothed in gay and costly habits, added much to the brilliant scene. In 1227 one of these travelling Parliaments was held at the beautiful city of Poictiers, and here the "Tribute of Roses" was founded. Queen Blanche of Castile, widow of Louis "the Lion," was regent, and made her entrance into the city in great state, surrounded by her ladies, all of whom were young and beautiful. A famous case was to be tried before the Parliament the next day. Count de la Marche, a young peer, was appointed to report the case. Alas for the cause, he was young and in love with one of the Maids-of-Honour to the Queen. He followed her about all day, but Queen Blanche seems to have been a rigorous chaperon, for he had no opportunity

to speak to his mistress. At night he sought her window, singing to his lute one of the charming love songs of Provence. Marie, wise beyond her years, warned him from her window that the case entrusted to his care would be lost on the morrow if he did not prepare himself. The count acted upon her advice, and the next day presented his argument with such eloquence and skill that he won his case, and his bride too. When Queen Blanche placed Marie's hand in his she said: "To perpetuate this day, and to remind the young peers of France to do their duty, I shall expect them to give a tribute each year to my Parliament, and it shall be a Tribute of Roses." From this year, 1227, until 1541, on the first day of May, the youngest peer of France presented a silver bowl of roses to Parliament. After surviving for over three hundred years this pretty

La France Roses

custom was discontinued, as a question of precedence between two young peers brought about a bitter quarrel.

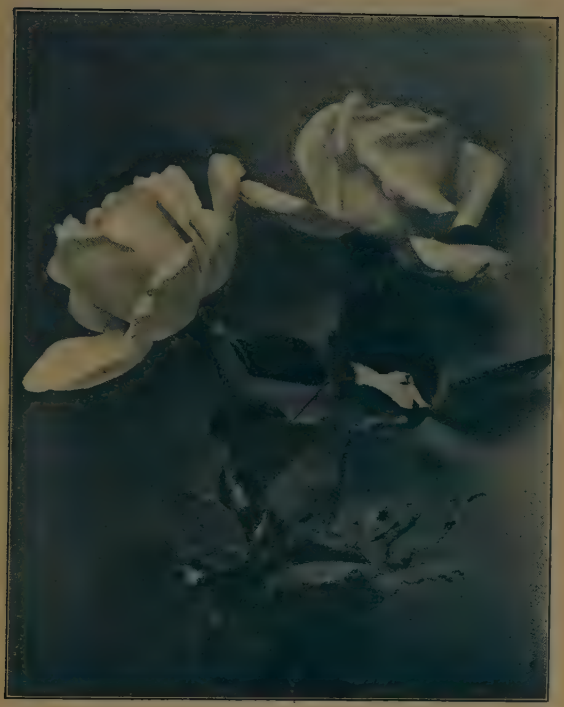
Not only the flower of love, the rose is also the flower of luck. She brings good fortune wherever she strikes root. She was the flower dedicated to Venus. How many phrases have been borrowed from her to express beauty and compliment, — "rosy-cheeks," "sweet as a rose," "rose-leaf skin," "a rose-bud mouth" are but a few. Aurora is called "rosy-fingered," for she lets slip through her hands the pink clouds of dawn, while the cheerful optimist is ever accused of seeing life through "rose-coloured glasses." In Devonshire a particularly blooming lass is said to look like a double rose, and maids the world over are compared to roses, even if the poet did tack on as an afterthought, "Set with little wilful thorns."

Yet how did the rose first get its

thorns? Not by way of a maid, but through the petulant humour of Dan Cupid. One day in Paradise this little idle boy was flying over a garden of roses, seeking, no doubt, what mischief he might find to do. Blossoming in the garden was a newly opened rose, blushing pink with its own loveliness. Cupid bent to kiss it, when lo! a bee curled up in the heart of the flower stung him on the lip. Crying with pain, straight to his mother Venus flew the boy, vowing vengeance on the bee. Venus, to satisfy him, gave him a bow strung with captive bees, and set the stem of the rose with stings torn from the poor bees. It is these stings that we call thorns.

No country in the world is more richly dowered with this Queen of Flowers than our own.

In 1670 Daniel Denton published "A Briefe Description of New York."



Bride Roses

He included many items about Hempstead, Long Island, a spot to which he was particularly attached, and the following is one of them:—

"May you should see, the Woods and Fields so curiously bedeckt with Roses and an innumerable multitude of delightful Flowers, not only pleasing to the eye but smell.

"That you may behold Nature contending with Art and striving to equal if not excel many gardens in England."

Who has not gathered with delight the sweet wild rose blossoming in the fields, a rosy cousin of that pale blossom which shines in English hedgerows? From Georgia come the praises of the sweet white blooms of the Cherokee rose.

TO A CHEROKEE ROSE.

"Thy one white leaf is open to the sky,
And o'er thy heart swift lights and shadows pass,—
The wooing winds seem loath to wander by,
Jealous of sunshine and the summer grass.

"Thy sylvan loveliness is pure and strong,
For thou art bright and yet not overbold —
Like a young maid apart from fashion's throng —
A virgin dowered with a heart of gold."

In Tacoma, with snow-clad mountains gleaming in the distance, the yellow roses blossom in riotous profusion, clambering up to the roof trees, peering into the windows as they pass. In California, roses grow in such numbers and such beauty that a "Tournament of Roses" is one of the annual festivals of the State.

It is in that climate, blessed with almost eternal summer, that stranger roses from distant lands bloom almost as freely as in their own home. The pale La France, the delicate Noisette, may be gathered in Lower California almost any month in the year.

With thorns, we expect the rose to defend herself, but with shadows — shall she have a shadow too?

THE SHADOW ROSE.

"A Noisette on my garden path
An ever swaying shadow throws;
But if I pluck it strolling by,
I pluck the shadow with the rose.

"Just near enough my heart you stood
To shadow it, — but was it fair
In him, who plucked and bore you off,
To leave your shadow lingering there?"

Frank Dempster Sherman explains in verse how it is that at sunrise in the morning you will find the petals of the rose wet with dew.

THE ROSE'S CUP.

"Down in a garden olden, —
Just where, I do not know, —
A buttercup all golden
Chanced near a rose to grow;
And every morning early,
Before the birds were up,
A tiny dewdrop pearly
Fell in this little cup.

"This was the drink of water
The rose had every day;
But no one yet has caught her
While drinking in this way.
Surely, it is no treason
To say she drinks so yet,
For what may be the reason
Her lips with dew are wet."

It is at this charming hour, and at sunset as well, that the humming-birds, of which California boasts half a dozen species, seek the roses, and rifle them of their sweets, which are doubly sweet when distilled with dew.

The flower chosen by New York State as its emblem is the always lovely moss-rose. This modest flower has a pretty little story as to how its buds became clothed in moss. There is one particular angel, so runs the tale, whose duty it is to bathe young flower buds in dew. Wearied out with his labours, the spirit one warm day in June lay down beneath a rose-bush and fell asleep. When he awoke refreshed he whispered to the rose, "Fairest of the fair, so thankful am I for the sweet shade you gave me as I slept, that ask what you will of me, it shall be granted." The modest rose waited a moment, and not knowing her own

Moss Roses

loveliness said, "On me another grace bestow." The angel looked on her silently, wondering what grace the flower wanted, owning already sweetness, fairness, and modesty. "Wait but a moment, lovely rose," he cried, and hied away to the forest. There, spread on the ground beneath an oak, he found what he sought, — a carpet of moss. Kneeling, he gathered one by one its fine and lace-like sprays, choosing only those which glowed greenest and were most delicate. When both his hands were filled he hurried back to the rose and bound tenderly about each bud a veil of the green moss,

"And robed in Nature's simplest weed,
Could there a flower that rose exceed?"

Of all peoples, perhaps the Hindus have the most mystic and yet the most sincere love for flowers. They will wander all day through a garden, pausing before a flower, studying and

admiring it, weaving fanciful tales regarding it, and expending on it both love and care. Vishnu, one of the three chief gods of Hindu mythology, found his wife Lakshmi in the heart of a rose. Listen to how it came about. One day Vishnu was floating on the water to cool himself from the heat of the day. Suddenly he saw beside him a lotus flower slowly opening its petals. From the middle of the lily, when it was fully blown, rose Brahma. The two gods fell into conversation, and soon came to quarrelling over which was the most beautiful flower in the world. Brahma turned and pointed to the lotus from which he had just risen, and which floated, with its pink-tipped petals rising rank on rank, a perfect flower with a heart of gold. But Vishnu would not agree with Brahma.

"In Vaikuntha, my paradise," said

he, " grows a flower a thousand times more fair and sweet than your lotus. It is pale as the moon, and bears a perfume that excels that of any other flower."

Brahma laughed and would not believe. " Show me this wondrous flower," he cried, " and if it is as fair and sweet as you boast, I will yield to you my place in the triad and you shall be chief god."

" To-morrow," replied Vishnu, " we shall set forth, for my paradise lies beyond land and sea, and when I travel thither I must go as beseems a god."

To this Brahma agreed, and it was arranged that they would meet the following day and travel to Vishnu's paradise.

Together Vishnu and Brahma sought Shesha, the serpent of infinity, and on his back travelled beyond the realms of space to Vaikuntha, where

grew the loveliest flower in the world. Drawing near, they could see the towers of Vishnu's palace rising above the encircling walls, and when a single note sounded from the conch-shell the gates swung open.

"Will you banquet first," said Vishnu, "or will you first see the flower which as far excels your lotus as the moon does a tiny star?"

"The flower, first the flower," cried Brahma, for the Hindu will ever prefer the pleasure to be had from the contemplation of beauty.

So Vishnu led him to a bower formed all of mother-of-pearl. It was open on every side, so that the sweet winds could sweep through and the sunshine could look in. The roof only kept off the heavy rains. Beneath this shelter grew a rose-tree, slender and graceful, with glossy green leaves. It bore but a single flower of

Soupert

exceeding size, creamy white, and with so sweet and delicate an odour that it seemed to fill the air.

"Behold," said Vishnu, "the fairest flower in any paradise."

As he spoke the rose bent toward him, the petals gently unfolded, and forth stepped Lakshmi. She knelt at Vishnu's feet, murmuring: —

"I am sent, dear god, to be thy wife. From the heart of the rose I come to reward thy faithfulness and loyalty."

Vishnu raised her and turned to Brahma, who bowed and said: —

"Henceforth Vishnu shall be chief god, for it is true that in his paradise grows the loveliest flower eye has ever seen."

When the lotus heard what Brahma had said, for a bird carried the news from Vaikuntha, she grew quite green with envy. To this day her petals are

tinged with that envious shade, but the bride rose never grows less sweet or fair.

Music, when soft voices die,
Vibrates in the memory;
Odours, when sweet violets sicken,
Live within the sense they quicken.

Rose leaves, when the rose is dead,
Are heaped for the beloved's bed,
And so thy thoughts, when thou art gone,
Love itself shall slumber on.

SHELLEY.

Rambler Roses

LILACS.

"THE PENSILE LILACS STILL THEIR FAVOURS THROW."

AS one looks on the lilac, like the rose a wanderer from the Orient, he wonders why this favourite of old gardens ever lost its popularity. Who can picture a garden with bordered walks and sundial, pleached alley and fountain, which did not have either rows or clumps of this darling of the spring?

In its branches, protected by the close-set leaves, the robin builds her nest. The catbird, choicest singer of the home choir, pipes his melody from its swaying twigs, and the song-sparrow will desert her favourite lowly nesting site to weave her grass-lined cup amid its blue-green foliage.

Near the kitchen door of those rambling old houses built by the sturdy Dutch one will find many a gnarled and ancient bush which in Maytime is clothed in beauty and redolent with sweetness, content for the remaining eleven months to draw into the background and be forgotten for more splendid but less fragrant blossoms. Drive through the country, particularly New England, in the springtime, and many an abandoned farm will wave a welcome to you through its lilac blossoms.

More pathetic yet are those ruined homes of which no traces are left save a crumbling foundation and, perhaps, the worn doorstep, still protected by its lilac-bushes bending over it as if to conceal its desolate condition.

Whittier, in "The Homestead," gives a sad picture of such a deserted dwelling: —

Eckenholm

"Against the wooded hill it stands,
Ghost of a dead home, staring through
Its broken lights on wasted lands
Where old-time harvests grew.

"Unploughed, unsown, by scythe unshorn,
The poor, forsaken farm-fields lie,
Once rich and rife with golden corn
And pale green breadths of rye.

"Of healthful herb and flower bereft,
The garden plot no housewife keeps,
Through weeds and tangle only left,
The snake, its tenant, creeps.

"A lilac spray, still blossom-clad,
Sways slow before the empty rooms;
Beside the roofless porch a sad
Pathetic red rose blooms."

On the shores of the Ashley River, not many miles from Charleston, South Carolina, may be found the most desolate spot which one can imagine. The picture is different from the New England view, for an additional touch of melancholy is given by the grey moss which drapes every tree, and which is stirred by every passing breeze, a noiseless, fluttering cloud of grey, — a pall, in this case.

In the last half of the seventeenth century, a band of men, who could not find under the laws of the Massachusetts Colony that freedom of thought and act which they desired, set forth to found a new town, and to wrest from the wilderness of Carolina homes for themselves and their families.

They started from Dorchester, Massachusetts, and in remembrance of this they named the new clearing on the Ashley, Dorchester, also. Little by little the town grew and prospered. They built first some rude homes for themselves, then a church, and then a fort.

By 1750, eighteen hundred souls lived here: there were half a dozen plantations, more than one manor-house, a race-track, upon which the aristocrats from Charleston loved to speed their blooded horses, and many evidences of prosperity, including

some schools. The colony survived the discouragements incident to starting in the wilderness: they lived down internal disagreements; they were not exterminated by Indian raids. The enemy which conquered them was more insidious. The deadly fever which rose from the river was what broke their courage, thinned their ranks, and caused them, a few years later, to abandon the homes, the church, and the fort, which they had built with such painful toil.

Nothing remains now but a melancholy tower of the church around which a young forest is springing. The foundations of the fort are fast crumbling away. Of "Tranquil Hall," the largest and finest manor-house in the town, there is but a pile of bricks, which is guarded by the most splendid lilac-bush I ever saw. Its twisted trunks are nearly as large as a man's

arm, and its branches spread far and wide, concealing the desolation, and making one spot of beauty where all else is sad.

When I saw it in the spring, hundreds of blossoms crowded on its branches, and around it hovered slender brown bees, while from the shelter of its branches the white-throated sparrow called, and the cardinal bird whistled, " Cheer-up, oh, cheer-up."

So enshrined in our sentiments and affection is this shrub that we scarcely can realise that it is a foreigner brought to our shores. Twelve species are found in a wild state through various parts of southwestern Europe, central Asia, the Himalayas to Mongolia, northern China, and Japan. There are several statements as to how it became distributed over European gardens, but the most authentic seems to be that it was brought to Vienna by

Chinese Weeping Lilac

Busbecq, the ambassador of Ferdinand I., who was stationed at Constantinople. This would bring its introduction into Europe at about the year 1550. From Vienna it soon spread into many other countries, and in some parts of Europe it has become half wild. In Persia the lilac blossom is a rosy purple, gorgeous in tint, almost lurid at sunset, and particularly lovely after a shower, when it twinkles with a million diamond dewdrops.

A PERSIAN LOVE-SONG.

"The rising moon sheds round her silver veil.
Come forth, belovèd, e'er her brightness fail.
The lilies pale with sweetness in the grass,
The roses blush with joy to see you pass.
Come, hear the nightingale, a voice with wings,
That only waits your presence, e'er she sings.

"Ah, let me weave a chaplet for your hair,
Of pale and rosy lilacs, lady fair.
Woe to that lover who would choose a rose
That in its heart a stinging bee may close.
Or yet a lily, or a spray of vine,
Or any bloom that wreathes a cup of wine.
The flower I gather, love, for your sweet sake
Breathes love that neither time nor ill can shake."

Women in the Far East, as a rule, cannot read or write, and by them the language of flowers is studied, for by its means may be told a whole love story, a warning may be given, or even so tame a thing as a message of friendship expressed. Not only in these summer lands may a gentle heart be swayed by the sentiment which lies in the cup of a flower.

In a quaint old annual bound in green and gold, much scored with faint pencil lines, about verses of sentiment, I found the language of the lilac to be "unrequited love." Pressed between the pages were a few lilac blossoms made into a little chain after the fanciful manner of children. So dry and withered were the flowers that they fairly fell apart in dust as they were turned over. There was the single name "Aretheuse" on the fly-leaf.

Were the tiny chain and the shabby

book all that was left of a tale of unrequited love? Poor Aretheuse, were those spots on the page tear stains? Whence came you? Whither have you gone? Nevertheless, your little book shall no longer be knocked about on a counter covered with dust, neglected and despised; its faded leaves shall be tied with a bit of lilac ribbon and laid gently by.

Among Lowell's poems are many on flowers; their charms and sweetness are extolled, and many graceful fancies are woven about them. But for the lilac, although it blossomed freely in his garden, he has little to say; two references only can I find. The pretty little trifle following is one of them:

"AUF WIEDERSEHEN!

"The little gate was reached at last,
Half hid in lilacs down the lane;
She pushed it wide, and, as she past,
A wistful look she backward cast,
And said,— 'Auf weidersehen!'

"With hand on latch, a vision white
Lingered reluctant, and again
Half doubting if she did aright,
Soft as the dews that fell that night,
She said, — 'Auf wiedersehen!'

"The lamp's clear gleam flits up the stair
I linger in delicious pain;
Ah, in that chamber, whose rich air
To breathe in thought I scarcely dare,
Thinks she, — 'Auf wiedersehen!'

"'T is thirteen years; once more I press
The turf that silences the lane;
I hear the rustle of her dress,
I smell the lilac, and — ah, yes,
I hear — 'Auf wiedersehen!'

"Sweet piece of bashful maiden art!
The English words had seemed too fain,
But these — they drew us heart to heart,
Yet held us tenderly apart;
She said, — 'Auf wiedersehen!'"

In his poem "Al Fresco" he mentions one of the favourite tenants of the lilac, —

"The Robin sings, as of old, from the limb!
The catbird croons from the lilac-bush!
Through the dim arbor, himself more dim,
Silently hops the hermit-thrush."

The name lilac is derived from the Persian *lilag*, which signifies a flower,

Archduke John

and in England as well as in America it often became "laylock." Before the name lilac became popular it was called the "blew-pipe tree" because the wood can be hollowed out and serve as the stems for pipes. Walks bordered on each side by blew-pipes were very fashionable when this shrub was first introduced into England, but now they are rather crowded out of their rightful place. Such a walk in May is all loveliness, and one feels with them as with few other shrubs, that the first whiff of their fragrance in springtime unlocks the very heart and soul of memory. A lilac-bordered walk stirred by a light wind becomes a tossing sea of bloom, and seen by moonlight, an enchanted path.

The lilac belongs to the same family as the olive. Medicinally it has a value from the fact that an extract from the unripe seeds is good as a

febrifuge and also as a tonic. The wood itself is fine grained, and at one time much used for inlaying. Gerarde in his "Herball" says of the lilac that its fragrance is too powerful, "Troubling and molesting the head in a strange manner with a ponticke and unacquainted savour."

The merit of this shrub is attested by many writers. Walter Savage Landor, in his "Imaginary Conversations," says in condemning Italian gardens, "As for shrubs, I have rarely seen a lilac, a laburnum, or a mezereon in any of them, and yet these flourish before almost every cottage in our poorest villages." This was about 1800. The Swiss, Henri Amiel, in his journal writes, "I strolled from the irises to the lilacs, round the flowerbeds and through the shrubberies." A sweet spot in which to draw inspiration.

Rousseau, writing nearly a hundred years before the Swiss, speaks of a garden which was adorned with "patches of lilac, hazel, alders, seringas, broom, and clover, which clothed the earth whilst giving it an appearance of being uncultured." It was the abode of birds and bees, rich with sweetness and gay with colour.

Robert Burns, poet of melodious lines, sings thus to the lilac:—

"O, were my love yon lilac fair,
Wi' purple blossoms to the spring;
And I, a bird to shelter there,
When wearied on my little wing!

"How I wad mourn, when it was torn
By Autumn wild, and Winter rude!
But I wad sing on wanton wing
When youthfu' May its bloom renewed."

In France, at the court of Francis I., about the first quarter of the sixteenth century, there flourished two rival factions called "the Lilacs" and "the Blues." Madame d'Étampes

was leader of the former, while the beautiful Diane de Poictiers was chief of the wearers of the blue. The two, the most beautiful and prominently unscrupulous women of their time, were loved respectively by the King and Dauphin. The struggle for supremacy was bitter and long. Not a day passed without an expression of hostility on one side or the other. Madame d'Étampes was nine years the junior of Diane, but the wit and courage of the latter were more than a match for the beauty and youth of Madame d'Étampes, and in the end she triumphed over her rival.

But, after all, it is in England that the lilac is best known, or, perhaps, one should say longest known, save in Vienna. No festival in the long category of holidays has called forth more joyous writing than May-day. It was beloved by simple as well as

gentle folk; and from royalty to the meanest hind, all took a part in its ceremonies and observances. Indeed, so deeply rooted have these festive influences and holiday customs become that they are among the last to yield to the more prosaic manners of our times.

For centuries on May-day lads and lasses, with their elders as well, court gallants and ladies gay, went forth a-Maying, either to gather blossoms still dripping with dew to hang before the door of the one they loved, or to bathe their faces in this dew to preserve or increase their fairness. Henry VIII., Bluff King Hal, as he was often called, married at nineteen Catherine of Aragon, who was twenty-five. The first years of their married lives were happy ones, and they had not long been wedded when we hear of their dancing gaily on May-day about a

flower-decked pole. They were staying then at their palace at Greenwich, and had gone out to meet the Corporation of London, who came bringing home May blossoms from the hills of Kent. Samuel Pepys, whose diary is a running record of manners and customs of his time, says for May 1, 1667: "To Westminster; in the way meeting many milkmaids with their garlands upon their pails, dancing with a fiddler before them; and saw pretty Nelly standing at her lodgings' door in Drury Lane in her smock sleeves and bodice, looking upon one; she seemed a mighty pretty creature."

Pretty Nelly was Nell Gwynn, at that time an actress at the King's Play-house, and a very charming dancer herself.

May-day began at midnight, and it was at this hour the breaking down of branches and boughs began, which were afterward decorated with gar-

President Grevy

lands and nosegays, brought home at sunrise and placed at windows and doors.

Shakespeare speaks of the custom in his play of "Henry VIII.," and again in "All's Well that Ends Well." Few villages are left that keep up this ancient custom, which has passed with much that is poetical, and yet which would appear rather unseemly to twentieth-century eyes.

In different localities different flowers were selected as May blossoms; cowslips and primroses were favourites in many places, and so were hawthorn branches. In Cornwall and Devon, pixie-ridden counties where so many quaint superstitions had a firm sway, the lilac is the May flower, and a peculiar virtue attaches to it if gathered before the sun is up and while still wet with dew.

Many uncanny fancies hover about

May and her blossoms. Even in prosaic America there are many persons who lack the courage to be wedded in May. It is unlucky, the saying runs, and it needs the spell of June to remove the curse, and make the day go merrily.

To turn once more to Devon and Cornwall, which have as many lucky and unlucky flowers as Japan, hear what makes a most unfortunate nosegay: a branch of blackthorn, a sprig of hawthorn, a spray of lilac. Yet what a sweet and seemly bouquet it would appear to eyes less versed in lore. Blackthorn and hawthorn when bunched together are said to produce illness, but lilac is fatal to love affairs. Its delicate colour, so becoming to a blooming cheek, and its sweet perfume beside, will not make it tolerated by an English lass as a bunch for a buttonhole.

"She who wears lilacs will never wear a wedding ring," runs an old proverb, and brave indeed is she who will run counter to such a warning. A boutonnière of lilac is paid for dearly by solitary spinsterhood, so the village maiden lets the lilac-bush alone.

For the same reason a wise mother with marriageable daughters will see to it that no sprig of this unfortunate sweet-smelling flower is ever brought inside the house. On the outside of the window-sill they may be placed with impunity, but there is no matrimonial luck about the house which contains lilac. London residents are not so superstitious, and gather with delight the lilacs which grow so profusely in the city and suburban gardens. Perhaps they do not know the unluckiness in love which this charming flower confers. Village folk wonder that clever Londoners do not know or

care about the fatal nature of this shrub in matters of the heart.

In many a small hamlet in the heart of England, to give to your sweetheart a sprig of purple lilac is to say you wish the engagement broken, while stout-hearted bachelors who sport a boutonnière of it show that they are not afraid of feminine blandishments, and are proof against Cupid's arrow.

The white lilac, the sweetest and most refined of all the species of this shrub, is called less unlucky than the mauve, but neither should this be made a gift between lovers; it will prove as fatal to love as an opal ring. What a pity it is that so sweet a blossom should get such an evil reputation, for the white lilac must live and flourish for seven years before it will put forth a blossom.

Indeed, there is a legend as to how the lilac came white, which is whis-

Le Marke

pered among the English lasses, but always in broad daylight, mind you.

The story runs that a pretty country girl, passing along the road one day, caught the attention of one of the "Lords of the North," as some of the great English noblemen were called.

He flattered, she listened, — ah, well, it was the same sad old story; and she died, a country flower despoiled, then cast away. She had been well loved in the village where she was born, and on her grave, which was dug close to the wall of the grey old churchyard, her village-mates placed many a spray of lilac to cover over the rude mound of earth, upon which, as yet, no kindly grass had taken root.

When they laid the boughs over her they were a rosy mauve; but when, at sunrise, the villagers on their way to the harvest field passed that

way, they found the blooms snowy white, and the sprigs well rooted and apparently growing. They grew into brave bushes, and in the springtime were ever a mass of bloom. For love of her, some of the roots were transplanted into the gardens of the villagers, and in this way the white lilac spread over England. So they will tell you in a little village on the River Wye, in Hertfordshire, and they will show you the bush still growing on her grave.

In addition to the name of blew-pipe, the lilac is also known, in some rustic parts of England, as Prince's Feather, and by the still homelier title of "ducks' bills." In recent years this shrub has been made to bear double blossoms, which give it an unfamiliar appearance.

Leigh Hunt says that "variations in flowers are like variations in music, often beautiful as such but almost

always inferior to the theme on which they are founded — the original air," and the doubling of the lilac may almost seem a mistake.

In Hungary there is grown a lilac very beautiful in colour and shape, but absolutely without scent. It is called the Countess Josika's lilac; no doubt there is folk tale connected with its name.

Valerian, in ancient herballs, was often called German lilac, and the Indian lilac or crape myrtle is a splendid shrub from China, bearing large rose-coloured flowers.

There has been during the last few years a revival of interest in the cultivation and propagation of these garden beauties. An infinite variety of tints has been produced, shading from white almost to black, through endless shades of blue or rosy purple. They rejoice in many pretty names, such as Carola,

Lilarosa, Marie Legraye, Princess Alexandra, Aline Macquery, and a dozen others, besides such graver ones as Ludwig Spaeth, Archduke John, etc.

But it is not to these favourites of fashion that our affections really turn, but to that familiar friend of our youth which rejoiced only in the name lilac, or even "laylock" if spoken by one of our elders. It was of that Hawthorne wrote so charmingly sixty or more years ago in his "Mosses from an Old Manse."

He has called the particular essay "Buds and Bird Voices," and draws a delightful picture of the grey, bare house which was old even in his day, and which does not seem much more ancient now, after one hundred and thirty-seven years of service.

This is what he says: "The lilac-shrubs under my study-windows are likewise almost in leaf; in two or

Rothomagensis

three days more I may put forth my hand and pluck the topmost bough in its freshest green. These lilacs are very aged, and have lost the luxuriant foliage of their prime. The heart, or the judgment, or the moral sense, or the taste is dissatisfied with their present aspect. Old age is not venerable when it embodies itself in lilacs, rose-bushes, or any other ornamental shrub; it seems as if such plants, as they grow only for beauty, ought to flourish always in immortal youth, or at least to die before their sad decrepitude. Trees of beauty are trees of Paradise and, therefore, not subject to decay by their original nature, though they have lost that precious birthright by being transplanted to an earthly soil. There is a kind of ludicrous unfitness in the idea of a time-stricken and grandfatherly lilac-bush." There are still lilac-bushes growing and blos-

soming about the old house, lineal descendants, no doubt, of the grandfatherly one of which Hawthorne speaks, for they are rich in bloom and heavy with sweetness in blossom-time.

The bluish-green tint of the foliage, with that grey bloom of mildew which is so apt to form on the leaves, is a note of colour in the brilliant green of summer, held by no other shrub. As far away as you can distinguish shade you will recognise the familiar tone and welcome an old friend. Once again from new plantings the lilac waves its prince's feather in the fertile soil of Long Island, as it did some centuries ago, when not a good ship came into port without its quota of "roots, trees, shrubbes and seedes," for the house mother to tend and nurse into blooming beauty, or for use in the kitchen garden or orchard, or in the cool, still room.

William Lawson, a famous English gardener, writing in 1618, says nothing so improves a garden as bees. "A store of Bees in a dry warme Bee-house, comely made of Firboards, to sit and sing and feede upon your flowers and sprouts, and make a pleasant noise and sight." Many a row of hives may still be seen in those parts of the country where the march of civilisation has not been too rapid, sitting not far away from the kitchen door, and beneath the shade of the comfortable lilacs.

A little poem by Clara Doty Bates tells this very prettily: —

"The sun shone warm, and the lilac said,
'I must hurry and get my table spread,
For if I am slow, and dinner late,
My friends the bees will have to wait.'

"So delicate lavender glass she brought,
And the daintiest china ever bought,
Purple tinted and all complete;
And she filled each cup with honey sweet.

"'Dinner is ready!' the spring wind cried;
And from hive and hiding far and wide,
While the lilac laughed to see them come,
The little gray-jacketed bees come hum-m!

"They sipped the sirup from every cell,
They nibbled at taffy and caramel;
Then, without being asked, they all buzzed, 'We
Will be very happy to stay to tea!'"

The lilac does not lose its beauty with the fading of its flower and leaf. In winter its branches stand out in sturdy fashion against a cold sky, showing plainly the next year's buds carefully wrapped up against the cold. To me the lilac is one of the surest indicators of the approach of spring, for the one beneath my window shows a pale and delicate shade of green almost as early as the larch. To that herald I look for signs of colour late in February.

There is a saying in some parts of the country that if the lilac and horse-chestnut buds are well set, it

Alba Grandiflora

portends a fruitful year, coming from the fact, no doubt, that what is favourable for one tree is good for all.

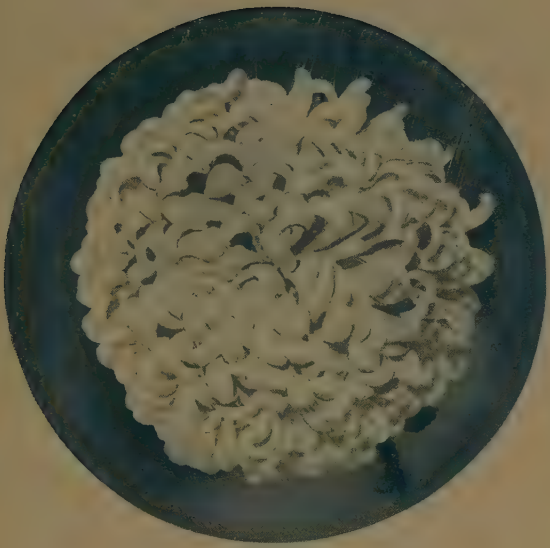
There is a tradition that the lilac was first brought to America by a Dr. John Durand, a Huguenot, who came to America in 1690, from La Rochelle, France. With others of his faith he settled first in New Rochelle, New York, named after his beloved home in France. Afterward he removed with his family to Derby, Connecticut. Even in that time of perilous and uncertain travelling, room was found for such small shrubs and plants as they had managed to bring, and some lilac-bushes were among them. Dr. Durand died at Derby in 1727, but his descendants still live there, and there are many lilacs growing there, too, a sweeter and more lasting memorial than an ever so costly one of stone.

It is not only the country or subur-

ban dweller who may enjoy the pleasures of "lilac-tide," for in the public parks in almost every city of the Union are growing quantities of these bushes. In Central Park, New York, for many a year, May fifteenth has seen the lilacs in bloom, or at least showing tips of pale lavender amid the tender and incomparable green, which is the colour of its foliage in early spring. While the bluebird is the sweetest minstrel of those first days when "Winter lingers in the lap of Spring," the lilac is torchbearer to Summer, as she waits for Spring to glide away, before flinging from her apron her treasures, — summer roses, summer songs, and summer showers.

CHRYSANTHEMUMS.

"THE GOLDEN BADGE OF COURAGE."



Maud Dean

"I HAD wandered far through many lands; had listened to the tinkling music of the samisen and the voices of women singing. I had climbed high mountains, seen strange gods in the temples; had rested 'neath flowery trees in the heat of the long summer days, and had scattered money with a free hand.

"Suddenly, in a far country, my thoughts turned to home, to my wife, to my children so long unseen, to my garden blossoming and fair. I set my face toward home; I travelled long. Soon now shall I see my beloved. Lightly, lightly, speeds my boat along, my garments fluttering to the gentle breeze. The rice-fields are growing

brown, for winter is not far off. From afar I descry my old home and joyfully press onward in my haste.

"Alas! as I come nearer I see the ruin time has wrought in my home; see my faithful servants, grown old and grey, rush forth to meet me; my children, lean and ragged, cluster at the gate. Sad though all things look, there is the old pine tree and my chrysanthemums laden with blossoms of gold."

Thus wrote T'ao Yüan-Ming, who lived from 365 to 427 and became one of the most learned and noted of all the Chinese writers.

From China the chrysanthemum was introduced into Japan, and thence all over the world, but one will look in vain in old "Herballs," for them under this name. The first of these flowers to bloom in European gardens, over two hundred years ago, were called by the long name of *Matricaria*

japonica maxima, and they are spoken of as bearing large flowers, white, yellow, blush, purple, and crimson in colour. They were rechristened, and as by far the greater number showed yellow blossoms, the name chrysanthemum was given, "golden flower" from the Greek words *chrysos*, gold, and *anthos*, flower.

Breynuis, a famous old botanist, tells how these flowers were brought from Japan to Holland in 1689, and how skilful and patient men worked over them for many years, changing them from their single form to double, button, pompon, and other varieties. Reede, an English gardener, writes about having some as early as 1699, and Linnaeus mentions them in 1753, by which time they were no longer scarce.

Who would imagine that the huge, thousand-leaved ball, which is the present form of the flower, belongs to

the same family as the modest daisy and the humble feverfew? Yet it does, and began life by having a great golden eye, and a single rim of petals around the edge. By the persistence of man the minute golden flowers in the centre have been endowed with corollas like those on the outer edge, and the present chrysanthemum no longer recognises her humble extraction; she is like a proud sister in silks and feathers, who overlooks poor Cinderella sitting with her feet in the ashes.

The botanical name of our common field daisy, or whiteweed, is *Chrysanthemum Leucanthemum*, but its homely or common name changes its form with the locality in which it is found, and may be daysie, daysy, daysey, dayseye, or even daieseyghe.

Chaucer speaks of it,—

"The dayseye or elles the eye of day,
The emperice and flour of floures alle."

Philadelphia

Shakespeare mentions it many times over, and when in its progress round the globe it reaches Scotland, its name changes entirely and it becomes gowan.

Milton, who uses his knowledge of flowers so constantly, has in "Comus" this passage: —

"The sounds and seas, with all their funny drove,
Now to the moon in wavering morrice move;
And on the tawny sands and shelves
Trip the pert fairies and the dapper elves.
By dimpled brook, and fountain brim,
The wood-nymphs deck'd with daisies trim,
Their merry wakes and pastimes keep."

Burns has it, in "Auld Lang Syne,"

"We twa hae run about the braes,
An' pu'd the gowans fine."

In "Guy Mannering" Scott speaks of these little flowers also, —

"They [the sheets] were washed with the fairy-well water, and bleached on the bonnie white gowans, and beetled by Nelly and hersell."

There is a curious phrase, which almost comes under the head of slang,

connected with this lowly flower. A horse that in trotting lifts its feet but slightly from the ground is known as a "daisy-cutter," and the modern user of the phrase points with pride to the eminent authority he quotes.

In "Rob Roy" you will find this horse-law duly set down: "The trot is the true pace for the hackney; and were we near a town, I should like to try that daisy-cutter of yours upon a level piece of road."

In America the variety of local names bestowed upon the daisy is absolutely bewildering. Oxeye we all are familiar with, but there is also bull's-eye and dog's-eye, summer-, moon-, and horse-daisy, goldeneye, and in some places where it is too abundant for the wishes of the farmer, devil's-eye.

In all countries young maids, and their swains as well, have told their

fortunes by means of this simple flower, the French demoiselle as well as her cousin across the Rhine having their own particular rhymes.

Lowell's pretty lines, "With a Pressed Flower," tell the story.

"This little blossom from afar
Hath come from other hands to thine;
For, once, its white and drooping star
Could see its shadow in the Rhine.

"Perchance some fair-haired German maid
Hath plucked one from the selfsame stalk,
And numbered over, half afraid,
Its petals in her evening walk.

"'He loves me, loves me not,' she cries;
'He loves me more than earth or heaven!'
And then glad tears have filled her eyes
To find the number was uneven.

"And thou must count its petals well,
Because it is a gift from me;
And the last one of all shall tell
Something I've often told to thee.

"But here at home, where we were born,
Thou wilt find blossoms just as true,
Down-bending every summer morn
With freshness of New England dew.

"For Nature, ever kind to love,
Hath granted them the same sweet tongue,
Whether with German skies above,
Or here our granite rocks among."

Its relative, the feverfew, is botanically *Chrysanthemum Parthenium*, and was originally a European species which has become naturalised in this country. Its first use was for medicinal purposes, and it made a terribly bitter tea, which was liberally bestowed upon persons suffering from fevers.

The camomile, which looks much like small daisies, is another of these plants, which, travelling from Europe by devious ways, has become a settled resident here, as well as in Asia, Africa, and Australia.

It is the garden camomile which furnishes the aromatic flowers that were so frequently used for a blood purifier and tonic, in those days when our grandmothers devoted a portion of each garden patch for medicines and simples.

It was as a valuable adjunct to the medicine garden that the chrysanthe-

William H. Lincoln

mum flowers first were brought out of the Orient, and it was not till attention had been attracted to their rare and decorative beauty that the plant was rechristened and grown for ornament. A Chinese writer calls it "the flower of retirement and culture." After commerce with China had been firmly established, many seeds and cuttings were brought from there by merchant sailors for their women folk at home, much as bulbs had been carried from Holland. France first took great pains in raising seedlings and growing flowers with incurved petals — what is called now the Chinese type of flower. For greater popularity, however, we must look to the Japanese varieties, so odd and bizarre in shape, some ragged with petals curved and twisted in every direction, and some with but two rows of petals fringing the golden eye.

Second only to the rose in the amount which has been written about it, the chrysanthemum is a flower to wonder at and admire, but not to love. American florists, never weary of assisting Nature, are trying to impart fragrance to this flower, which would still more increase its popularity. The market reports for last year show that more than five hundred thousand dollars' worth were sold.

In the East the chrysanthemum is a national emblem, receiving almost reverential care and attention. Each year, in November, in the large cities in Japan thousands of plants are sold. Many of them have but a single stalk, with an immense flower ten or twelve inches across, on its top. The *Kiku-no-sekku* or Chrysanthemum Show, held in the city of Tokyo, is of the greatest beauty, and there are features of it quite peculiar to Japan. Besides the wonder-

ful potted flowers of endless colours and shapes, there are numerous scenes, historical and mythological, which are constructed entirely of these plants in full blossom. The hands, feet, and heads of the figures are of papier-maché, and, being delicately painted, are very lifelike. But the draperies, mountains, waterfalls, and animals are made entirely of these flowers woven into solid masses. There are such designs as a goddess rising from the sea, a white elephant with a gaily dressed lady on his back, and some artist-florists will even go so far as to depict Bandai-San in a state of violent eruption. These pictures are put in sheds covered with matting, and one may see occasionally the florist repairing the garment or some part of one of the figures. They are made on bamboo frames, and into this frame are set whole plants in flower, their roots

carefully packed in moss. The flowers and leaves are then woven into the desired shape by dexterous fingers, the floral pictures kept in the shade and abundantly watered, and the plants go on growing happily, far differently from our flowers at exhibitions, which are snipped off so that they wither and die in a few hours.

During the festivals the flower markets are open in the evening, and at that time the majority of the buyers are the working people, who have no costly vases at home, but who do not lack a bit of bamboo-cane in which to place a twig or flower and contemplate its beauty.

The arrangement of flowers in Japan is not haphazard or left to chance, but everything about it is arranged by laws. There are certain flowers which are used for fête days only; certain others which are abso-

Glory of the Pacific

lutely prohibited. There are several styles of arrangement, each style having a name, and this is a regularly taught branch of learning. Vases in which to put the flowers or twigs are of infinite variety, and harmony between the vase and the flower is one of the first conditions to be observed. There is a flower for each month, and for each circumstance, happy or otherwise. Special bouquets are arranged for birthdays, deaths, for the first day of the eighth month, and for the hundred and one little ceremonies which are an integral part of Japanese life and for which it would be a serious mistake to use the wrong flower.

"In the Islands of Japan
The Kiku opens like a fan.
A thousand petals set with art,
Where once she had a golden heart.

"In Spring the cherry-petals shower,
In May wistaria clothes each bower,
Gorgeous peonies, lilacs rosy,—
Every season has its posy.

"The iris blues the land in June
When suzumuchis are in tune.
In each pondlet lotus blows,
Filling pools with fragrant snows.

"November skies are dull and grey.
'T is then the Kiku holds her sway.
Perfect, golden, pink or rose,
Almost every shade that grows,
May be gathered in Japan,
Flowery land of Kiku-San."

The place which a bouquet should occupy in a room is also important, and it is usually put before the *kakemono,* or painting which ornaments every well-furnished room in a Japanese house. There should always be harmony between the picture and the bouquet. Thus, before every painting by the famous artist To-em-mei, who loved chrysanthemums, should be placed a vase of these flowers. Neither is it good taste to stand too near a vase of flowers. Three feet is a respectful distance from which to admire it. Approbation should be expressed in a low voice, simply and

quietly, the colour of the flowers being first touched upon, and different expressions being suited to different tints.

We do not usually regard Japan as a country of vivid colouring, yet during the end of September the tender green of the rice-fields changes into brown, the jay flies shrieking through the woods and among the old pines, and the mountain forests clothe themselves in colours which are even more brilliant than the livery of scarlet and gold of our forest trees. At this season comes the *kiku* in all its glory.

England had her "Wars of the Roses," which were waged only between rival houses, whereas Japan has had her "Wars of the Chrysanthemums" between rival dynasties. These wars lasted longer and were more bitterly contested than those in Britain; for fifty-six years, from 1336 to 1392, when the members of the

Southern Dynasty became the true Mikados, the Northern Dynasty, or "false" Mikados, were at war with them. The latter finally became extinct.

One may see readily why the imperial emblem of Japan is a chrysanthemum. It is a white one, of sixteen petals on a crimson ground, and it is much in evidence on that November day when the gates of the Akasaka Palace are thrown open and the people invited in to see the beautiful show of *kiku* flowers.

We have a saying which runs, "Every dog has his day." The Oriental way of expressing the same idea is far more flowery and no less expressive. They put it thus: "In the second month the peach tree blooms, but not till the ninth the chrysanthemum. So each must wait till his own turn comes."

Kioto

There is but one spot, as far as legends tell us, where it is not deemed lucky to cultivate chrysanthemums, and that is the pretty little city called Himeji, in the province of Harima. In the city of Himeji are the ruins of a castle with thirty turrets, which belonged to a rich nobleman. In the grounds of the castle was the house of one of the nobleman's retainers, who had a serving maid named O-kiku, the word *kiku* meaning chrysanthemum flower. Her duty was to take care of the many precious things in the house,— rare bronzes, images of beaten brass set with jewels, the household shrines, and all that was costly and fine. Among the many beautiful things were ten splendid dishes of gold which it was her duty to keep bright. One of these dishes was suddenly missed. Even after long search it could not be found, and the girl, knowing she would be held re-

sponsible, and finding it impossible to prove her innocence, drowned herself in a well. From this time forth her ghost returned nightly and could be heard counting the dishes slowly, with sobs, beginning — one — two — three, and so on up to nine. Then would come a cry of agony, a loud burst of weeping, and again the girl's voice counting — one — two, until nine was reached again. This she did every night until dawn came, and so, on account of poor O-kiku's fate, no one plants her name-flower in Himeji.

Not alone in the land of its birth is the chrysanthemum admired and extolled. Nowhere is it grown more successfully than in London, great city of smoke and gloom as it is. Should you chance to stroll into the Temple Gardens in November, you might almost fancy yourself transported across seas to Japan itself.

The gardens of the Temple and Inner Temple are a mass of these regal flowers. They are arranged in beds and borders, thousands and thousands of them, showing every variety and colour, and massed to display them to the best advantage. No invitation or permit is necessary, and the whole world of London may visit and enjoy them; and it does. During the cold nights the flowers are protected by muslin curtains drawn over them.

These exhibitions have been held since 1850, each year in November. At the first show about five hundred varieties were exhibited, and it was considered a marvellous number. Last year there were over two thousand, and each year sees anywhere from a dozen to twenty new varieties.

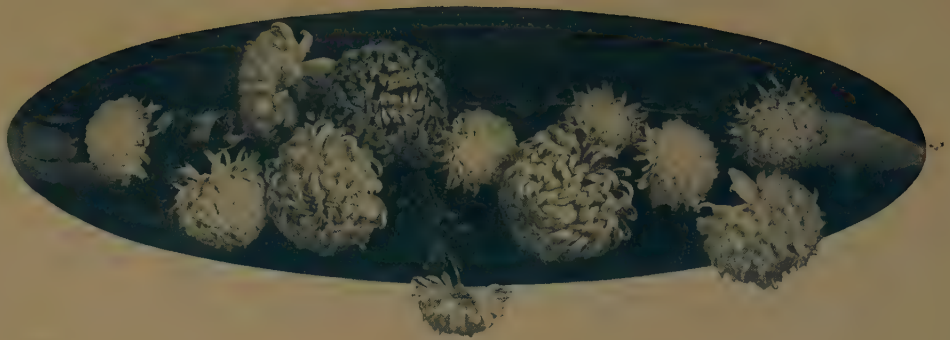
The Lord Mayor's show, held on November 10 in London, is one of the great events of the year, and there is

always to be found in it a floral car made of superb chrysanthemums, which is always greeted with murmurs of approbation as it passes along.

Perhaps the most endearing quality of the chrysanthemum is its willingness to grow. It does not demand country air and sunshine, but will blossom with almost equal beauty in the city, provided a modicum of care is bestowed upon it and soil suitable to its taste be furnished it.

In rural England the button or pompon chrysanthemum is a great favourite, and has many pet names attached to it. In Somerset grows a small variety of this flower, commonly called winter daisy, while some of larger size, which bloom late, are known as winter roses.

The yellow corn-marigold, which is native to England, is called botanically *Chrysanthemum segetum*, and grows



Ivory and Maud Dean

as freely in the cornfields as the scarlet poppy. The buds of this plant are gathered by the old wife and made into a decoction so bitter that it must be a sufferer indeed who is willing to gulp it down. The corn-marigold was one of those plants which always found a place in my lady's still-room, where she compounded flavours for cooking, perfumes and washes for the toilet, and medicines for the family, the receipts for which were handed down from one generation to another.

In the Black Forest, Germany, every family, however poor, strives to grow a plant of white chrysanthemums, in memory of that Christmas Eve so long ago when the Christ Child came to the cottage of a peasant asking for shelter and food. The family was very poor, the legend runs; the father worked hard to get enough food to fill the many little mouths, and keep

the cottage warm and shoes on all the feet. The night before Christmas the meal was hardly any better than on any other night, and it was scanty enough, yet each child gave to the little guest a part of its own portion, and was pleased to see him eat it with satisfaction. When the meal was ended the Christ Child rose, his poor garments became white, and a halo glowed about his head.

With a sweet and loving smile he thanked them all, then vanished like a vision. The children cried, "It was the holy Christ Child," and peace and contentment were over that cottage all the night. The next morning, Christmas Day, when they opened the door they found blossoming beside the doorstone beautiful white flowers with dark-green leaves. The father plucked some and carried them within doors, where they were faith-

fully tended, and these flowers which grew upon the spot where the holy Child stood are the snow-white chrysanthemums we know so well.

The name chrysanthemum will have to be changed again, since other colours than yellow have grown to be popular. Indeed, in England red and pink are more highly esteemed than the gold. The question, "What's in a name?" could never be applied to this flower, for the whole world seems to have been ransacked for fanciful titles for different varieties.

There is the "Fair Maid of Guernsey," Canary Bird, Ebornella, Elaine, Good Gracious (an American variety), Georges Sand, Black Hawk, Mutual Friend, Oriental Glory, Le Grand Dragon, Queen Alexandra, Rosy Morn, Market Pink, Godfrey's Pet, and a thousand more. These names would have pleased Ruskin, who invented

names to suit himself, and always fancied some term that indicated the colour.

The old-fashioned name which was bestowed on those first chrysanthemums which bloomed in American gardens (about 1820) was Artemesia, dedicated to the Greek Diana, Artemis — a very pretty name for the pale and rather dull lavender blooms which came out courageously late in the year, when most other flowers had succumbed to the nippings of the frost.

Sitting before a cheerful fire in one of those fine old houses which dignify many a village street in New England, the talk turned upon the generally inappropriate way in which floral names were bestowed upon girls. Lily is borne by many a brilliant brunette, and Violet by one whose last thought is of shrinking, and so on through the whole list.

Ivory

At last the eldest of the group spoke, and in a musing tone, as if indeed she looked back over the years which had long since fled, told this tale: —

"I never knew," said she, "but one person who bore the name of a flower to whom it seemed a part of herself. I was but a young girl myself when I first came to know Miss Artemesia, who lived in that great white house with Corinthian columns that stands on the farther side of the street.

"She was an only child, and as she came late in the married life of her parents, they named her for the new flower which had but recently bloomed in the garden, and which, blooming late in the year, reminded them of their little daughter.

"The little Artemesia grew and flourished, playing around the stately garden on sunny days, and though she escaped many of childhood's ills,

she had but a frail prettiness, not unlike her namesake flower. The years passed slowly, unfretted by the hurry and bustle which affects those in the outer world, and first her mother, and then her father, fell asleep, — one can hardly call such peaceful ends dying, — and Artemesia found herself quite alone.

"'T was now I knew her first, — a dainty little lady, somewhat prim in all her ways, and whether consciously or not, growing each year more and more like the artemesias which grew so plentifully in her garden, their pale colourings repeated in her gowns of mauve or grey, with the delicate laces which she always wore, and which were not unlike the rime of hoar-frost which often lay on the garden blossoms.

"Perhaps you do not remember your uncle, certainly not as he was when we first came here to live. Handsome, vivid, full of life and mer-

Canary Bird

riment, his whole nature was in direct contrast to the shaded grey of the little lady of the garden.

"He went there, yes, as he went everywhere else in the village, and no one guessed her secret, least of all Harry himself.

"Then came that direful day when Sumter was fired on, and your Uncle Harry was one of the first to leave the town. We little dreamed that he, the incarnation of life and vigour, would never come back. Still less did we dream that to Miss Artemesia his departure had meant so much.

"We had seen her, those dreadful days, going about as usual, and bound up in our own cares, hardly noted her gradual fading away.

"At last one day she sent for me — to bid me good-bye, she said, and when the truth came home to me, it was she who dried my tears.

"'Dear sister,' said she, "'do not weep for me, for truly I am like my own flower. Born late, I loved late, but rejoice with me that I do not linger late.'

"Her prophecy was too true, for she, too, like her father and mother, fell softly asleep, and I gathered the last artemesias in the garden to lay upon her grave."

"Oh, mother," cried an eager young voice, "is that why you always will have those dull artemesias growing in the garden?"

"Yes, dear, and I hope now you will have a little more patience with them, for the sake of Miss Artemesia."

We are apt to associate this flower with cold, dull weather, flying leaves, and bare branches, yet it is also a native of Africa, where there are many legends connected with it, particularly with the plant which bears

Rosy Morn

small white blossoms. One of these concerns a Moorish maiden, Zara, whose lover was a warrior, chief of a wandering tribe. On one of his absences she dreamed that she saw him lying dead in the desert, with a spear through his heart.

The figures in the dream seemed so vivid that she sprang from her couch with a scream, and listening, heard the sound of a horse's hoofs beneath her window. In a moment she had run to the casement and thrown it open, hoping to find her dream untrue; but it was upon no living horse and rider that her terrified eyes rested, for so shadowy and evanescent were they that the moonlight shone directly through them. She called her lover's name several times, each time with less courage, and then as the ghostly figure turned, revealing the spear in his heart, she fainted and fell from her

window upon a bank of red chrysanthemums which grew beneath it. The flowers paled slowly from red to white with grief at seeing her die, and so they remain to this day. When crushed they exhale a faint, sweet odour, an emblem of the love that never dies.

Few of our poets have had the courage to extol this flower in verse; no doubt its name of many syllables has daunted them.

In the old annuals, or "Friendship's Offerings," which were so highly esteemed by our grandmothers, one will always find a section of the book devoted to the explanation of the language of flowers. The sentiment bestowed upon our golden flower is one of the prettiest that may be found; it reads, "Courage under adversity."

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